

# *The Chicago Jewish*

# FORUM

A National Quarterly

Winter • 1960-61

## Name-Changing

Among American Jews ..... A. A. Roback

A Jewess of Venice ..... Erika Spivakovsky

Newspapers — A Story ..... Zalman Shneour

The Two Worlds of Arnold Zweig ..... Lothar Kahn

Life in Rural India ..... Bradford Lytle

The Broken Wall—A Sea Legend .. Grigori Gershuni

## From Sages, Chroniclers, and Scribes:

*Lady Montefiore's Impressions of Jerusalem*



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*In forthcoming issues of*

## THE CHICAGO JEWISH FORUM



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VOLUME 19, No. 2

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# Name-Changing Among American Jews

By A. A. ROBACK

SOME YEARS AGO Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt advised American Jews to adopt American names. Of course, the question might well be asked: What is an American name? The name Roosevelt, which she bore twice with pride—i. e., both as her father's daughter and her husband's spouse—is no more American than Rosenfeld. Even the names of the Mayflower settlers and the founding fathers, while time-honored and pioneer-rooted, are European to begin with—Danish, Norman, Anglo-Saxon, and Celtic. Probably names like Pocahontas would be the only ones to lay claim to the category of American names.

Of the various groups of immigrants to this country, there are some which tenaciously cling to their, in some cases, awkward names which may be pronounced only with some difficulty. The Poles and the Czechs (e. g., Przybyszewski and Hrdlicka) probably come first in their heroic attempt to preserve their symbolic continuity, while the Hungarians, the Greeks, and the Italians are not far behind them in that respect. The Irish and the Germans feel at home with their names, which are so common as to constitute a large segment of the majority name-group, and yet many bearing such patronymics will, through a slight change, conceal their origin. The writer remembers once to have incurred the ire of a Frohlich whom, in a business letter, he addressed as Fröhlich. In the case of the French, not only is the pronunciation anglicized in most instances, but often letters will be substituted to give the name an English look and sound, and occasionally the original name will be translated, as from Roy to King.

Perhaps in this process of name-changing the Jews have shown greater activity and ingenuity than other ethnic groups. As a minority they have suffered more from dis-

crimination than other white minorities. There are few specific Jewish names which, in order to serve as such, would have to be derived from the Hebrew. Since patronymics are a comparatively recent device, the Jew in antiquity would be distinguished through some characteristic relationship, as son of Abba; or by his vocation, as Johanan the Sandal-maker; or early tribal and religious status (Cohen, Levi, Segal = *S'gan Levi*).

Of the various Jewish immigration waves, the Spanish and Portuguese Jews steadfastly stuck to their Iberian patronymics (Lopez, Touro, Seixas). The German Jews are equally proud of their names, although sometimes a letter or Umlaut would be dropped in order to facilitate spelling and pronunciation. Thus, Rebecca Gratz, prototype of *Ivanhoe's* Rebecca, was a Graetz really, and the name Filene was originally Filehne. Most of the German-Jewish surnames are in reality place names. At the time the German Jews arrived here in considerable numbers—settling in Cincinnati, New York, and Philadelphia—the family name represented something like a coat of arms. The struggling pedlars and subsequent merchant princes did not find it imperative to conceal their origin, especially since their religious ties would have defeated the purpose of such protective coloration. Besides, in many of the communities in which they settled, there were numerous Gentiles with like names. Since the families have eventually gained prominence in the commercial or industrial field, it would hardly have been profitable to assume a different patronymic at that late stage.

The British Jews (the Isaacs, Jacobses, Nathans, Samuelses, etc.) never showed any leanings toward sailing under false colors, and they had nothing to be sorry for in this respect. A Disraeli became England's great-

est statesman; an Isaacs attained the rank not only of Lord Chief Justice of England, but of Viceroy of India; while another Isaacs became the first Governor-General of Australia outside of the royal family. The British took the rhetorical question of their great bard more seriously than he himself did, both in the play and by virtue of spelling his name in several different ways. And now an Abraham Ribicoff has been appointed a member of the Cabinet.

As thousands of Jews from the Slavic countries and Hungary began to settle here in the '80's, the names took on a different cast. A great many names were, of course, still of German origin, partly because of German provenance, but mainly because a suggested name would consist of Yiddish words akin to the German. Many of the names were Slavic, like those ending in *ski*, *off*, *vitch* or *wicz*, *in*, etc. Again there were the caste names like Cohen, Levi, Israel, and the vocational names (Farber, Shechter, Shuster).

It is among this class that the surnames underwent a transformation from the very start for various reasons. It may have been because an uncle who established his nephew in this country imposed his own name upon him, especially where the latter's name was particularly uncommon and unwieldy. Or, some official who misunderstood recorded the name of a new arrival as it sounded to him. Thus Feygelson might suggest Ferguson. Of course, a Ferguson who speaks a pidgin English is an anomaly, but immigration officials or policemen are not the most logical or perceptive of people.

#### *The Motive Is Practical*

In general, however, the first generation was willing to abide by the names they brought with them from the old country. It is only among the most practical and provident that, as they grew more prosperous, the thought of Americanizing their name would occur to them. Sometimes a trifling deviation would spell the difference between a foreigner and a native. Thus Wise is an honored name in American Jewry be-

cause both the founders of reformed Judaism in the United States (Isaac Mayer) and the founder of the Jewish World Congress (Stephen) bore this name; but even the tyro knows that Wise is not a Jewish name. The name in Slovakia and Hungary was Weiss (white). This was a conformist step, but it also spared the owners of the name the need of telling people how to spell and pronounce it. The handle to their personality did not wobble. In this particular instance, there was some advantage gained through the "wise" association, which would form a halo even before the Wises would open their mouth.

Other slight changes, like Eliashson into Ellison, Davidson into Davison, Wolfson into Wolson and Woolson, Waldstein into Walston, Goldstein into Galston or even Gladstone, have done wonders for certain Jews whose physiognomy has not brought home an exasperating contradiction. At times, a Jewish name lends itself to a neat metamorphosis, while at others, one must reach out for a lancet and lop off the Slavic tell-tale. Thus, Polishuk becomes Polish; Rabinovitch would first be shortened to Rabinoff, then to Rabin, and finally to Rabb. Katzenelson is abridged to Nelson. Magilnitzky easily whittles down to Magil and even becomes McGill. It is surprising how many Jewish names sound Anglo-Saxon once the final syllables are removed, and still more surprising is it to find that Jewish names are so close to certain Anglo-Saxon or Norman patronymics (American to all intents and purposes) that one might have taken them to be counterparts. How simple it is to convert the Slavic Askovich into the aristocratic English Asquith, to turn Hilkevitch into Hillquit; and is not Gainsborough just made for a name like Ginsburg or Salisbury for Salzburg? A family by the name of Knokh (a knuckle, in Yiddish), written in Russian KNOX, accepted this Scotch wind-fall gratefully, and so knokh has become Knox (nocks) with no change in orthography.

A whole transformation table may be devised to equate Jewish and Gentile names

from the samples we have seen in our contacts and readings. Thus, Alterovich becomes Aldrich; Oshmant, Ashmont; Ashberg, Ashbury or Ashby. Erental becomes Arundel. Belfer (a nursery-school assistant) is now Balfour, especially since the latter has become a patron saint of the Jews ("Balfour Declaration"). Caplan becomes Copland or Chaplain; Even appears as Ewen or Owen; Farfel becomes Farlow; Glatshstein, Gladstone; Grodinsky, Godinsky or Godin (suitable in French Canada); Haffkin, Hopkins; Hariton, Harrington; Brenner, Burns or Barnes; Hersh, Harris; Yaffe, Joffy or Chafee; Khazn (cantor), Chasin; Kessler, Castle; and Levi becomes Levis, Leavitt, or Lovett. Lowell appears more as the "adjusted" form of the given name Leybel. Mendelson becomes Madison; Moses, Moss or Mosier; Ravitch, Ravage; Savitzky, Savitz and Savage (and why is Savage preferable to Savitzky?); Tepper, Tupper; Weinberg, Wainsborough; Shtern, Stearns; Wolofsky, Walsh (reaction against the orthodox "bourgeois" father actuated the *défi*); Wallach, Wallace; Weiner, Warner; Winietzky, Weyne; Yassky, Jassby; and Yudelson, Huddelson.

#### *Disguise Upon Disguise*

Like a euphemism, which soon outlives its usefulness, the adapted name loses its distinction or *entrée*; and then a new disguise is desirable, especially where the bearer has migrated to another country. To take one illustration, Levin, as readers of Anna Karénina will remember, is an honorable Russian name. Russian Jews were quick to see the easy transition from Levi or Levy to Levin, but soon, on the Continent, every Levin (Lewin) was taken as a Jew; hence it became necessary to camouflage the Levin; and that was done à la française, generally as Le Vine or La Vine, or sometimes Le-vigne, or even Lhévinne (the virtuoso). Similarly Lebovich acquired the New Look by dropping the vich and gallicizing the remainder into Lebeau. Science has had many a Sachs as contributors, but few realize that the Jewish surname Zaks is the abbreviation of Zera Kodesh S'ford (the "holy seed of

Spain," referring to the martyrs and survivors of the Inquisition) although it glides easily into Sachs in Germany and Austria and Saxe in England or the Dominions. The old saying (of a series), according to which some advantage will be found even in the most negative circumstance, may here be adapted to read, "It's a queer Jewish name which has no turning." And then there is, of course, the possibility of translation.

The camouflage, as might have been expected, has hit the high-water mark with the name Cohen because of its commonness, in addition to its being Jewish. In the synagogue ritual, the Cohen is the priest, belonging to the highest caste; but outside, he is only a Cohen, one of many thousands. Milt Gross once revealed the tragi-comedy of the situation by his drawing of a tombstone on which we read:

#### IN MEMORY OF OUR LOVING FATHER ISIDORE COHEN

Benson Cowan  
Davidson Connell  
Samwyx Cane  
Jacques Quesne  
Maxwell Kune  
Jo Keown

But there are at least a score of other variants I have seen, such as Conn, Kagan, Cohan, Kuhn, Cole, Coburn, and Conway—to list only a few.

#### *Translations*

The process here is quite easy provided the name possesses a meaning, as with vocational patronymics or those referring to personal characteristics. Shnaider, when not changed to Snyder, becomes Taylor; Khazn becomes Cantor; Shwartz (Swartz, Schwartz) turns into Black; and Vaiss (Weiss) is translated into White. Many names are so similar in sound that the translation shows but a slight deviation—e. g., Gold, Brown, Greenstone, Tucker, Silver, Binder, Flaxman, Cooper, Houseman, Singer, Long, Locker, Fiedler, Goodman, Fisher, Factor (originally meaning agent), and many others. The translated name offers less of an objec-

tion on the principle that the spirit of the family trade-mark is still there, although the sound is the motive. What prompts the change? Commercialism, social aspiration, conformism, escapism? But here we are abutting on ethical territory. Social psychology may still probe the motive without committing itself on the question of right or wrong.

In Israel, there has always been a tendency to translate or otherwise change Jewish names of Slavic or German origin into Hebrew equivalents (assonant approximations). Thus, Silverman becomes Kaspi; Berlin is turned into Bar-Ilan—the new university in Israel is named for Rabbi Bar-Ilan (Berlin). Weizmann would have been Ish-Khittim had the late President chosen to change his name in accordance with the official custom; but, as was reported, when someone mildly reproached him about this Galut-tie, he replied, "The trouble is that I already have a name" (meaning a reputation). This was quite true. It is questionable whether Ben Gurion (originally Greenberg) and Ben-Tzvi (Shimshelevitz), the successor of Weizmann, would have changed their names after their rise to office. In their case it probably was not altogether the result of Jewish nationalism but partly the fashion or, let us say, the urgency of retaining some identification (a *nom de guerre*) in a secret organization under the Czarist regime, such as the group from which the present Israeli regime has sprung (Poale Zion).

I have no doubt that not a few persons have wondered how a very common Anglo-Saxon name like Pratt comes to an Israeli official domiciled in the United States. The puzzle is solved when we reflect that Pratt is also a Hebrew word signifying "a particular" or "detail." Indeed, the Hebrew *prat* and the English "particular" are most likely cognates—that is to say, they have sprung from the same root.<sup>1</sup>

#### *The Adoption of Typically American Names*

The trend in name-changing has now

gone beyond translation, or apocope, or assonance. Typical American names, the relationship of which to the original patronymic is not apparent, are frequently chosen. There are Clarkes and Warrens, Perrys and Hargroves, Palmers and Grants, and Weynes; and I have even known of more than one Ross, and seen Forrest, Lawrence, McKinley, Kinsley, Knight, Ford, Webster, Williams, Pearson, Spencer, and Sherry under pictures which by no stretch of the imagination could be associated with the ethnic groups among which such names would be expected.

It is usual to suppose that such exaggerations stem from a feeling of inferiority and therefore are a mark of the parvenu, the "bourgeois gentilhomme," the Jewish tradesman who would pose as a Yankee, and, in short, the generally uncultured or those who have abandoned all ties with their kind. Some of these typically American names, however, crop up in Jewish organizations, even in the Yiddish press, and, indeed, a few Hebrew teachers and rabbis are their bearers also. H. Grant was a Hebrew pedagogue and writer; and among the rabbis, one can think of Rudolf Coffee, Louis Wolsey, John Ross, R. Foster, Th. Lewis, and Arthur Talmadge. We sometimes hear of Rabbi Swift; and had the famous Chief Rabbi in Israel (then Palestine) changed the initial K to a C, we would have had a Rabbi Cook. There is a Rabbi Gauguin in Africa.

It may seem odd but the typically Scotch surname Douglas has been adopted by two Jewish Hollywood stars (Kirk Douglas and Melvyn Douglas) and by a rabbi, or his father, possibly.

Among the names we find in *Who's Who in World Jewry* are: Cole, Coleman, Conway, Cook, Cooley, Castleman (kestlman?), Gilbert (there are no less than eight of them; but it must be said, that this name, despite the Gilbert and Sullivan association, belongs to a fine Yiddish writer, Shloime Gilbert, one of the martyrs in the Warsaw ghetto), Evans, Dublin (here again it would seem that there was a town in Poland by

1. A. A. Roback, "The Semantic Structure of the Semitic Root," in *Destiny and Motivation in Language*, Chapter X.



this name, pronounced "dooblin," and Dr. Dublin's ancestors might have come from there), Lincoln, Nelson (Katzenelson), Robbins (four times), Robinson (fifteen of them, who probably were descended from rabbis—"rabin," Russian for "rabbi"), Turner (again a sort of homonym, since Toomer may be a Jewish name), Tuft, Weston, Wilder (vilder is a Yiddish word but hardly a Jewish name), Wingate, Winchell, Winton, and Wright. Dr. Sister, in Israel, has had the name even in Wilno.

### Stage Names

The adoption of a stage name is now considered a natural means of raising a performer's or entertainer's prestige with the public. Mary Pickford is regarded as more dignified than Mary Smith. A euphonious, glamorous name possesses a certain box-office value in that it excites the imagination and builds up a fictitious association to the advantage of the one in the limelight. It serves as an advance agent for the actor, singer, or virtuoso. Hence it might be anticipated that Jewish performers would make use of this device to a greater extent inasmuch as they have some discrimination to overcome. Not only the Hollywood galaxy—the Goddards, the Douglasses, the Wynns, and the Berles—but even the metropolitan stars like Jan Peerce and distinguished conductors like Ormandy have resorted to this prelude. The fact, however, that most of the top-ranking virtuosos did not change their names (Elman, Heifetz, Menuhin, Brailowsky, Horowitz, Rubinstein, to mention only a few) would argue that a great performer can reach the peak of success regardless of his foreign name. There was a time when a foreign name served as a special recommendation in musical circles. At any rate, it is not the way the name sounds, but how the tones emitted sound.

### Court Cases

There can be no question but that a change of name is sometimes justifiable; nor can it be disputed that an individual should not be at liberty to assume any surname he

pleases without publicly avowing his intention, as in a law court. Furthermore, it might well be expected that where there is action there is bound to be reaction, or specifically, when a people will wish to appropriate a well-known family name, members of that family may lodge a protest. That is precisely what happened a number of years ago in Boston, where

The Cabots speak only to the Lowells  
And the Lowells speak only to God.

When a man by the name of Cabitsky became Cabot-conscious, and petitioned the Court to grant him the privilege of realizing his desideratum, the blue-blooded Cabot family was up in arms—to think that a lowly Cabitsky could break into the exclusive Cabot circle, even if only in name; but the judge, I believe, was lenient, and eventually a compromise was arranged.

A more interesting case was that of a man called Einstein who petitioned for a change to Easton on the ground that his boy, in the Navy, was told by his superiors that he would stand a better chance for advancement if the Einstein name was dropped. This episode drew considerable comment in the press because Einstein happens to be the name of the greatest scientist of the century.

In the Province of Quebec, Canada, another petitioner came forward seeking to adopt the name Easton, but this time the original name was not Einstein but Epstein. Oddly enough, however, the family afflicted with this patronymic was not Jewish, but, because of the "unfortunate" name, was apparently identified with the Jews. The petition was naturally granted without further ado.

### The Sadness of It

We now come to the dénouement. Does this name-changing always bring good fortune? Does it spell happiness for the individual who has thus adjusted himself? Offhand one might have assumed that it does, but a writer has taken the trouble to institute an inquiry and has presented his results in *Commentary*.



We learn that in many instances the name-changing has occasioned problems which had not been dreamed of, and the erstwhile eager petitioners would have been glad to revert to their previous name-status. Perhaps subsequent generations will reap the benefits, but the recently transformed are often shunned by their relatives and friends. They are the butt of wisecracks and are ribbed even by their well-wishers. Complications arise leading to misunderstandings. Possibly, too, we may guess, the guilt

complex starts operating along these lines, for in a sense there is a severance of father-son continuity,<sup>2</sup> and the question of identity must recur again and again in the mind of the sensitive who, seeking to adjust themselves in society, have only betrayed their maladjustment. Thus, perhaps there is much more in a name than a lover's desperately practical philosophy has ever dreamed of.

2. In some instances, a son or a brother of a distinguished person wishes to show his independence by assuming a different name so that it could not be said that he capitalized on his kin's reputation.

## THIS BURDEN OF LIVING

## THE END OF SUMMER

By SELWYN S. SCHWARTZ

*This great burden of living:  
A knapsack of clocks of late hopes  
At the borders of ancient zones.  
And I am late.  
I am close to the gate of Night.  
I tip my hat to the sleepy sun:  
Dream, come and comfort me.*

*But always the Dream is not there.  
Stone-dimmed silence to halt me.  
In a copper cloud the metallic hour  
Is a wild bird  
That divorces the day at last.*

*And now, approximately past all its  
Measured whispers,  
These corridors of contended shadows  
Are loud with fears  
And Darkness.*

*The wild night is brilliant  
On the sidewalks. The complexion  
Below is sleep.  
I kicked my pebbles into that blackness  
Never having guessed  
This great burden of dreaming.*

*When the old clock  
Amidst the dead shadows  
Fell asleep  
The world stood at my doorstep  
With dark eyesight  
Deeper than night.*

*The night was neither late  
Nor the worst  
Upon the cold windows.  
The night could not see  
How I wept,  
Wept.*

*There were darker things  
In my room  
As I spoke to the cold clock.  
Suddenly in that blind delirium  
Silence broke open  
The age aloud of my dead summer.*

# A Jewess of Venice

By ERIKA SPIVAKOVSKY

A TRAVELER IN VENICE, crowded to distraction by his fellow-tourists in the Café Florian or at Harry's Bar, may be in the mood occasionally to go far away from them all. If he wishes genuinely for isolation, he should perhaps go, for a change, to the Ghetto. There, in the only outdoor café of the locality—a modest little inn, to be sure, and quite empty—he can drink a glass of wine in peace. Furthermore, the somnolence which surrounds him may help him let his thoughts wander along some unusual byways of history.

This particular neighborhood has such a varied past, while its present aspect is of such a colorless neutrality, that it seems hardly possible to bridge, in thought, over the distance of the generations. For one thing, this is not now really a Ghetto as we understand the word. In this quarter live all kinds of working-class people, and the only remembrance of Jewry are the old Synagogues and, possibly, though they may not now be in the hands of Jews, some rag pickers' barges anchored on the little narrow rio between the old and the new Ghetto, an immobile water lane, stiffened black with refuse, are the only reminders of Jewry. The shoddy barges are loaded with masses of filthy rags, tightly packed into huge, shapeless bales and bundles, the last vestige of the area's wretched major business through the centuries. But it is still officially called "Ghetto"—the last place in the world to bear the defamed appellation just like that. Fittingly, it was also the first. It was named *Ghetto Vecchio*, and the small round island beyond the bleak little rio was *Ghetto Nuovo* long before the Jews settled there in 1516.<sup>1</sup>

Before that date, Jews had not been able to establish a community in Venice. Allowed to come and go for business reasons only,

they could not bring their families. But when the war of 1509 had driven them from the mainland, out of Padua and Mestre, their business visits turned into a quest for asylum. They stayed on as unwanted guests, living all over Venice, a disordered situation that continued throughout the war years. Only by the year 1516 had Venice recuperated enough to give attention to new civic legislation. Then, at last, she granted the Jews a permit to stay,<sup>2</sup> provided a locality were found where they could be secluded.

Therefore, when a delegation of Jews met in conference with some senators, their leader, a wealthy banker, proposed as Jewish quarter the island of Murano. But Murano, seat of the ancient glass industry, was also the most distinguished summer resort of the patricians. Its palaces were so beautiful, its lemon trees and gardens so enchanting, that it was called the "abode of nymphs and demigods." On warm evenings, thousands of gondolas would crowd the lagoon between the northeastern side of Venice and this summer paradise.

That it occurred to the Jews to utter such a proposition, and that Venetian officials recorded it duly without fuss or sarcasm, testifies to the comparatively strong position in which the newcomers must have felt themselves. They dared ask for Murano at a time when no Jew could live in Spain, Portugal or any other territory under Habsburg rule; neither in England, France, the Netherlands, or Germany; when no place in all of Europe tolerated their existence except Poland and a few cities in Italy. But they had come to expect a great deal of humaneness of Venice. And Venice let them stay, let them live, but she would certainly not lose anything by her good deed. It was out of the question, of course, to let them turn Murano into a Jewish island.

Then it happened that Zacharias Dolfin, a leading Senator, involuntarily caused the new word of world-significance to be coined. Denying them Murano, he offered them instead the *Ghetto Nuovo*. Admitting that that fortress-like place was not in best shape just then, and that it lacked a gate, he promised that the city would at once build them gates, good, big, gates with lock and key, so long as the Jews would take care to restore the inside of the decrepit buildings themselves. They could not expect to find greater security elsewhere, and they knew it. And in the *Civic Annals of Venice*, in the year 1516, it says: "... the Jews of German and Italian origin were directed to live in the *Ghetto Nuovo*, that is the backyard of alleys, one of the dirtiest and swampiest places of the city. . . ." Murano, indeed!

Even in the beginning, when a few wealthy Jews still carried considerable weight with the Senate, the majority of the about 900 souls then comprised in the *Ghetto* were poor. The only trades allowed the German-descended Jews were the keeping of loan banks—never more than three—and the conducting of the nine or ten second-hand shops. Others depended for their meager living on inter-Jewish jobs, such as teachers of Hebrew and of music, as rabbinical officers, as small ritual shopkeepers, and as assistants to the Hebrew printing press (whose owners were Christians). Women concocted cosmetics, and made lace. But the majority must have existed on outright charity handed out by the few rich bankers who were very well off, what with the interest rate in the mid-16th century being no less than 13%, and this was considered to be little.

Yet all in all, conditions were still human through much of the 16th century. But in the 17th and 18th centuries the entire *Ghetto* (*Vecchio*, *Nuovo* and even the "*Nuovissimo*" addition) sank into utter degradation. Then, rag-picking remained practically the only work not forbidden the Jews by the government. There would always be a few more fortunate coreligionists on top: one or two export traders and textile manu-

facturers; a handful of physicians who, by way of exception, succeeded in evading the laws against higher education of Jews. But the overwhelming part were old-clothes dealers, rag-pickers, repairers of soiled mattresses—their own, and also those of the Christian world. In the 19th century, following the liberation by Napoleonic troops, the few wealthy Jews moved out, the poor remained. Finally, a nadir in the *Ghetto's* vicissitudes was reached in the times of Mussolini. It was frightful there in the 1930's. Hundreds of begging children would harass the tourist who incautiously strayed into this wretched neighborhood. The dismal street, the two small squares, swarmed with restless, emaciated legs, rags and tatters, hungry eyes, snatching hands, screaming throats.

Now-a-days, the beggaring hordes are gone. The place is altogether much improved. But what unimaginable mysteries are hidden in its past! Most of the frequent terrors and infrequent joys of the former residents, the unfathomable way of their everyday lives, the unnatural effect of the unnatural conditions under which they were shut in the *Ghetto*, all these are secrets forever buried with the Venetian Jews. It is a rare possibility, indeed, to penetrate that darkness ever so little, as we are able, accidentally, to do here. Some Spanish letters allow us to trace the real story of a beautiful girl who lived there more than 400 years ago.

In August of the year 1539, a young Spanish nobleman of about 36 years had come to Venice as the new Imperial ambassador to the Republic. The new arrival was Don Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, a courtier of Charles V with an exceptional reputation for brilliant wit and erudition.<sup>4</sup> An impecunious younger son of one of Spain's oldest and wealthiest families, he was at that time still undecided between a career in the Church (a path his friends believed would lead this outstanding humanist scholar straight up to the Papacy)<sup>5</sup> or a profitable marriage.

"I would marry a little chick if there were a magnificent one"<sup>6</sup> he had written from Venice to his closest friend and protector,

Francisco de los Cobos, Chancellor of the Emperor, through whose influence he had been chosen for that post. But to the disappointment of his gregarious nature he found himself socially in a sort of desert there, because the suspicious Venetian government forbade its nobles any association with the foreign diplomatic corps. Since he never could get close enough to the aristocratic families to see whether there were any daughters, let alone to propose marriage (instead, he surrounded himself with artists and writers and the entire Venetian intelligentsia, a sort of demi-monde, befriending such masters as Titian, Aretino and Sansovino) the only woman who there happened to attract him—in her way an outsider just as he—was a Jewess from the Ghetto.

If he had not been so intimate with Cobos, we would never know of that odd affair. But Mendoza, in his frequent letters to Madrid, inserted many hints about his private life, frank on the one hand, tantalizingly veiled on the other. There was a special mirth in his frankness, because he knew that the wife of Cobos—Dona Maria Mendoza, his cousin, a woman of charm and perspicacity, apparently—liked to read his letters to her husband, too. When he reported to Cobos about the adventures of the Marquis of Vasto (who in December of 1539 was on a state visit to Venice) "whom the little Venetian wenches come to see, in masks, three by three" and "who in the night after his arrival was bridegroom, being inflamed by two ballerinas,"<sup>7</sup> adding that, in these and other amusements, "the devil of a Marquis" and he himself missed the company of friend Cobos, the Senora de Cobos, in her next letter, scolded him roundly.

This must have been the reason for extra precaution when he first referred to the Jewess. ". . . And so that, if my Senora wishes to snatch this page as she did last time," he wrote on August 5, 1540, on a separate sheet accompanying his official letter of the day, "she should not find it empty, I must tell you that I made love here three months ago to one of the beautiful ones of

Italy, but she stopped me half-way, (saying) that she is a Jewess and could not do anything for me unless I became a Jew. I, who was not far from the one or the other, told her to go ahead, as little was amiss for that. Tell me, please, whether I should circumcise myself, and if you think I should, and if you should be coming here, do the same, because since the Jewess is beautiful, it seems a very good bargain to me."<sup>8</sup>

For some reason he had let three months pass before revealing this relationship to Cobos, and only from a still later letter can we infer that this scion of the great Mendozas, a potential Pope, actually had called on the Jewess in the Ghetto every evening and had continued to do so for months to come.

Mendoza's Jewess must have lived in the *Ghetto Vecchio*, not far from the present little tavern, on or near the *Campiello delle Scuole* (the little Place of the Schools), with the two Sephardic synagogues and the lovely old well, a part which, at that time, was still separated from the New-Ghetto Fortress with its locked gate beyond the tiny rio. She could not have belonged to those who were shut in from sunset to sunrise. She dwelt in the Old-Ghetto where Spanish and Levantine Jews settled some time after the establishment of the locked fortress for those of German and Italian ancestry. Unlike that, the *Ghetto Vecchio* was not closed off from Christian Venice before 1541.

The difference in personal freedom from 1516 until 1541, between the *Ghetto Nuovo* and the *Ghetto Vecchio*, is a small item with hardly a bid for significance within history. Therefore, no researcher has yet dwelt on its possible consequences. We are the first to be concerned in this matter, because, as one link of the puzzle, it assumes some importance in our reconstruction of past life.

The proof that the Jewess was an "Old-Ghetto" inhabitant (and, thus, a Spanish woman) lies in the following letter which Don Diego wrote to Cobos on November 24, 1540: "My portrait (by Titian) is ready

and I saw myself. I thought I looked so much worse since I left (Spain), that, at vesper time, I did not yet dare go to the Jewish quarter. Now you can understand how I shall feel among Christians. . . ."<sup>9</sup>

Obviously, he could not have gone at vesper time to visit someone living in a community where, as in the Ghetto Nuovo, the gates closed at sundown. On the other hand, only those of Spanish descent lived outside. It follows that his Jewess, who was still visible and visitable at dusk, was most likely of Spanish descent (and thus especially qualified to attract the homesick Spaniard), and for that reason she lived in the Old Ghetto.

The Sinoga as he called her residence (he never used the term "Ghetto"—a further proof, if it were still needed, that the word's particular meaning evolved only later through the wide fame of Venetian Jewry) must have been quite a livable place then. Only three or four years had passed since the Spanish and the Levantine houses of worship were founded (where they still confront each other, though they were since rebuilt in baroque style). The dwellings were still low enough to let in sunshine and air. The *Campiello delle Scuole* still had an uncrowded aspect, with its beautiful wellhead of marble that, like a rose-colored flower, rises out of a white chalice. Among the earliest of Spanish settlers, the Jewess and her family would have had enough living space at their disposal throughout the years of the Turkish war (which had dragged on for three years and, pending peace negotiations, was not yet terminated), and this tolerable situation did not change as long as the ship traffic over the Adriatic remained interrupted.

But even though the Ghetto in its earliest times was a passable living quarter, Don Diego's association with one of its inhabitants is still unusual—only to be explained by the extraordinary beauty of the girl, and, too, by his nostalgia for a woman of Spanish tongue (possibly she knew Hebrew and Arabic too; Arabic was his own specialty), and by his admiration for a level of culture

higher than that found in any Venetian woman outside the Ghetto.

They must have had much in common, in spite of their contrast in rank—not to mention the possibility that some of their remote forefathers may have been the same. (According to some sources, the entire Spanish aristocracy shared Jewish ancestors.)<sup>10</sup> If the Mendozas stemmed from the heroic Gothic dukes of Cantabria and boasted of the Cid in their family tree, many Spanish Jews thought fit to claim a direct descent from King David, the oldest nobility of all. Whether or not the family of this Jewess went back so far, one can still assume that, within more than a thousand years of their stay in Spain there were many prominent men among her ancestors.

In the year 1540, a Spanish Jewess of Venice who was at the most twenty years of age, probably less, could not have been a native of Venice, nor of Spain. Spanish immigration to Venice was of recent date. At the time of the Spanish exodus of 1492, those few refugees who found shelter in Italy had gone to the only places then willing to receive them: Rome, Naples and Ferrara. Venice had not yet established any Jewish community to which they could have turned. This Jewess could have been born in Rome of refugee parents in exile, in the early 1520's. Rome is the more plausible place, because if she had been from Naples or Ferrara, she would have stayed there. The Neapolitan community, under Spanish pressure, was expelled too, it is true, but that did not happen until later in the year 1540; and the Ferrarese never. But many in Rome had been forced in the year 1527 to find their way to Venice. During that year's "sack" of Rome by Charles the Fifth's Spanish and German troops, many Spanish Jews resident there were driven into their second exodus, some of them finding refuge in Venice within its recently established community. It might be assumed therefore that the girl who still spoke Spanish had come as a small child, with her twice chased parents, from Rome to Venice.

Naturally, the Jewess' family would be



impoverished, gradually or suddenly. Reminiscing about the glory of their forebears as physicians and ministers at the side of kings, the women would work for their living by lace-making. This occupation—a hobby of many life-times of her luckier, leisured, foremothers in Spain—would thus be put to good use. From the moment Don Diego knew the girl—before he had told Cobos about her—he requested Mrs. Cobos to send him patterns for making lace (of intricate Moorish design, presumably) and bags (for the needlework), items only to be had in Spain.

How, then, did his courtship progress? A short time after he had reported to Cobos of their three-months-long relationship, he mentions the girl again. "I have a garden and a house outside of Venice" he writes from Murano on August 16, 1540, "where, if I were an evildoer one could make assaults; but if the Jewess had her wish, I would quickly move to live in the Sinoga. My dear Sir, in my life I have not seen a more beautiful Jewess, nor a smarter one! She is a woman who has a head. . . ." <sup>11</sup>

On August 28 he had already returned from his stay in Murano to Venice, writing to Cobos: ". . . For the leatherbags which were very pretty, I kiss your hands. . . . The Jewess wore the blue one and that was no bad use for it. . . ." <sup>12</sup> (This should prove that she went out to Murano where he entertained sumptuously, Aretino being one of his guests.)

By September 1 he feels himself close to triumph: ". . . My relations with the Jewess are coming to the boiling point, and I believe we shall make peace without abandoning my religion. . . ." <sup>13</sup> By then she must have started to resign herself to the fact that he would never become a Jew.

For a while we hear nothing more about her, but Cobos continued to provide him with the gifts he had requested, and on November 24, 1540, Mendoza acknowledges them: ". . . The bags are in the Sinoga. If I thought you would be coming here, I should postpone the day of my circumcision to celebrate a feast for you. . . . Send me

some unbleached linen, as this Jewess, before we have yet come to the wedding, gives me a pain in the stomach. . . ." <sup>14</sup>

"I shall send you the unbleached linen with this" replied the kindly Cobos from Madrid, ". . . and I believe that the Senora Jewess must be the reason that you need it, and if that is the case, all must be very well employed. God knows that I should like to be present at your circumcision. . . . For the Senora Jewess I am sending you another bag, you will give it to her. I am sending also the unbleached linen. . . ." <sup>15</sup>

She is not mentioned for another two months. They may have quarreled. Although in September he had hopefully seen her submission near, he had been mistaken. Late in November he had to admit that she gave him "a pain in his stomach" ere it had come to what he called the wedding. Only by January 29, 1541, she appears again: ". . . I kiss my gentle patroness' hands, and may she send me the patterns. Yesterday I went to see the Jew quarter and saw my Jewess, her house stinks like a galley, and therefore I don't know what to do." <sup>16</sup>

For all that is known about the aspect of the Old Ghetto when he used to visit it daily at vespers, this statement seems unexpectedly harsh. But it is true: the place must have deteriorated rapidly within only a few months. It was the negative consequence of the recent prosperity coming to Venice, long stagnating and famished, through her final peace with the Turks. Merchants from the Levant began to arrive, continuing to swarm over the re-opened sea lanes, lifting the depression, restoring the normality of Venetian trade and industry.

Most of these traders with the East were now Jews, descendants of those who, some fifty years earlier when expelled from Spain, had been allowed to settle in Turkey under the tolerant administration of the Sultan Bayazid. Gradually, for several reasons which this is not the place to go into, the Venetian nobles' Eastern trade was passing into the hands of those Jews. The change of roles took effect so naturally that it was noticed by Venice with a start. <sup>17</sup>

These business men went to live in the vicinity of their synagogues in the Ghetto Vecchio. But this is a tiny island, consisting, literally, of nothing more than the *Campitello delle Scuole* and a few alleys behind the houses lining that miniature square. Daily, the place filled with more humanity. Every corner was rented out to newcomers. Landlords (Christians, who lived elsewhere, for Jews were forbidden to own real estate) in great hurry had additional stories built on all houses which 'til then had been only two flights high. In the midst of all this hasty and unartistic construction work, under scaffoldings and clouds of dust, heaps of debris and rubbish, accompanied by the daily swelling noise of haggling and bargaining, of excited voices of the crowded families of new arrivals, and of hammering of the laborers, the old world collapsed around those who lived there before.

Venice, on the whole, now revived, her shops were refilled with goods, her old trades renewed and new trades added. There was no more famine. But overnight the standard of living of the Spanish Jews, who had to look on helplessly, had sunk from the level of a clean and quiet existence to a noisy, crowded, and evil-smelling hell. And so it happened that, when Don Diego went there once more in January, the event of his visit to the Ghetto appeared noteworthy not only because he had gone there so seldom lately, but especially because this visit suddenly opened his eyes—and his nose—to the decay of the place.

But what was it he could not now decide? Whether to continue visiting her? There would have been no doubt about that: he would have resolved at once never to go there again. The question must have been, rather, whether he should drop her or remove her from the Ghetto.

For all his previous visits in the *Sinoga*, he could never have had much occasion to be there alone with her. A young Jewess did not live by herself. There must have been a household of close relatives in the intimacy of her small apartment. Probably he had always wished to take her away from

there, but she never listened to him, laughing off any idea of following him into Gentile Venice. After eight months of his courtship, however, when he also had shown pride by not coming to see her for a long time, and when her own world had changed from tolerable to disgusting—wouldn't she give in at last?

The decision must have been made shortly after his last visit of the 29th of January, probably early in February. For on March 12, 1541, he wrote to Cobos: "... I received the unbleached linen, and if I had to replace what Dona So and So can use up, I ought to call her 'La Signora Ambaxatora' (Mrs. Ambassador), not the Jewish quarter full of the stuff would suffice; but as God lives, I keep her until you come this way so that you should get a taste of Jewish virginity. . . ." <sup>18</sup>

Even if the last words are to be understood as the facetious courtesy of a Spanish host who compliments his guest by declaring his house to be "su casa de Vd.", the remark is frivolous and unworthy. Apparently, he never realized his responsibility of having brought the Jewess, who for him was nothing but a temporary adventure, from an honest way of living to a wrong one. He must have thought, in fact, that she regarded the morality of the times with the same levity as he. But, unwittingly, his own hints to Cobos disclose that she did not.

On hearing that she left the Ghetto (because this is what she did—he must have set her up somewhere near his own residence, the *Palazzo dell' Ambasciatore* on the Grand Canal in the parochy of San Barnaba) one might say that the Jewess, after all, was nothing but another Jessica. But Jessica is pictured as deserting her father and her community for an advantageous marriage, and for immediate baptism. This real Jewess does not resemble the character in Shakespeare's play. She had only sacrificed herself and not gained a thing. Probably she did not understand at first the full scope of his frivolity, of his cynicism, and of his indifference towards her. But after a short while she must have realized how

vainly she had forsaken not only her virtue but also her accustomed home. However crowded and evil-smelling the Ghetto might have become, she had lost it. Without the community of her coreligionists she could not have any organized worship, nor her accustomed, ritually clean food. On Friday nights, instead of the familiar calls of the Synagogue's beadle who went around the Ghetto, summoning everyone for the Sabbath services, the bells of the close-by churches would din strange, and for her, melancholy sounds into her ear, marking her as unwanted and foreign in her new surroundings.

In order to cling to something, might she not have joined the Christian faith? It would have seemed a natural thing to do. But we read in a letter to Cobos, dated April 8, 1541: "From the letter to His Majesty you will see the stand of business. I am fine and I have two Easter celebrations, one after the other, since my Jewess does it on Good Friday, and I, on Sunday. . . ." <sup>19</sup>

Astoundingly, this Jewess whose name we may never know, informs us that she had not deserted her religion. Alone in her law, she still was loyal enough to prepare and celebrate a Passover Seder evening. She would conduct this service as she had seen her father do it. She might still have had one of the Haggadah booklets of her forefathers. These beautifully written volumes of Spanish Jewry were bound in fine leather, decorated with arabesques in the manner of the faithful—unlike those of the German-Italian Jews who, in assimilation of the Christian world, at that time even put engravings of human figures into their sacred books, a violation of the Mosaic law. There were perhaps some faded spots of wine on the pages she showed him, traces of the festive ceremonies conducted by her father and forefathers, those uncompromising men who were always ready to curse a daughter who gave herself to a Christian. . . . And some hallowed crumbs of mazzah were possibly still clinging to the crevices of the booklet, of just such unleavened bread which she would also have served him. She must

have sent her maid (she would now have a servant, Negress slaves were the rule) for it to the Ghetto Vecchio where she herself could never set her foot again.

Nevertheless, the affair was in fact already starting to break up. True, his reference to "my Jewess" with her Easter celebration sounds idyllic enough. But it should have set her wondering—and it probably did—why he did not urge baptism on her. Such a negligence—remarkable in a potential Pope—revealing, as it did, an unconcern for the salvation of her soul, should have disclosed his underlying indifference for her. As an orthodox Jewess who believed in the dogma of her people, she would not have known that this omission rather reflected the indifference of a humanist-philosopher towards the tenets of Catholicism.

Another disturbance soon to arise was his own lack of vigor. "It is true, my dear Sir," he wrote to Cobos on May 19, 1541, "that I lost a testicle from a bump I gave myself on a chair, and no help for it. You may sympathize with the Jewess, as I had her already so well trained that not much was lacking for the resurrection of the bones of my grandparents. . . ." <sup>20</sup>

"My life is as usual," he says on May 29, "although the testicle tires me; thank God it is a member which is not very necessary. . . ." <sup>21</sup>

"My pain continues," says the letter of June 30, "so that I can truly be called 'magnificent testicle.' . . ." (a pun on his own title as "magnificent ambassador"). <sup>22</sup>

Evidently, if the Jewess had forsaken her honor, her home, her community, and her future, for her lover—after the uneasy pleasures of her first six or eight weeks in Gentile Venice, the lover was starting to disintegrate, too.

"Tibio in amores no sea yo jamas" ("Luke-warm in love I shall never be") <sup>23</sup> he had said: either hot like fire or ice cold would he be, and he was now ice cold while he had set her on fire. He notices in his letter of May 19: "What do you want me to write about my happiness? That the Jewess is in

a heat which is sufficient to burn up herself and my entire clan. . . ."

Invalid as he now was, he had cooled off so much towards her that he probably did not continue to see her daily, but preferred to sit down in his study to his mathematical experiments and to his philosophy. Whenever he did come, we can assume that he would be received with all the glowing fervor of a passionate but unsatisfied temperament. In his present state, this would be as embarrassing for him, when he could not respond, as her vehement reproaches would be disagreeable.

But all this was not yet the worst.

She is no longer mentioned now in the numerous letters to Cobos during 1541, the same period, when Don Diego went through a difficult period in official politics. It happened that Spanish-French relations had once more become openly inimical, and the worsened atmosphere enveloped Mendoza to such an extent that hired bandits in the pay of the French ambassador were out to kill him. He could not venture out of his house any more without the protection of a troop of bodyguards.

But Cobos wondered why he had received no more requests for bags or patterns, no more gay little reports on Don Diego's love life. Tactfully he refrained from questioning, until, about six months later, he could not suppress his curiosity any further. Politely he inquired after the "*Senora Judía*."

Don Diego was in no communicative mood. Querulously, he replied on January 29, 1542 (the first mentioning of her since May 19 previous, and the last as well): "... It is a very miserable life. Kidney pains, and fear, and suspicion, and giving audiences to the secret agents before dawn. With all that one forgets about Jewesses and everything else. . . ." <sup>24</sup>

That he should have forgotten her was possible, but this was not the whole story.

On June 2, 1541, it became the law in Venice that from then on all Jews still living in Christian territory should be moved to the Jewish quarter; and that quarter was to be shut off like the Ghetto Nuovo. <sup>25</sup>

Thus, after the month of May, when the Jewess found her relation with Don Diego somewhat strained, there came in addition, like the hand of fate, this new edict of the government against the Jews.

As is often the case, this law, directed in the first instance against the growing number of Levantines, was an afterthought, legalizing the events which had taken place already. The greater part of the Jewish merchants from the Levant had gone voluntarily to live near their place of worship, until, as we have seen, the Ghetto Vecchio had become so abominably overcrowded that the fate of at least one Jewess had since been rendered highly precarious. Finally, when there seemed to be no room for further influx, many later arrivals of the Levantines took residence elsewhere in Venice. They could do so because the law of 1516, which had sent the German-Italian community to the Ghetto Nuovo behind the closed gate, did not extend to them. But this situation was now beginning to get out of hand. The Venetian Senate, deciding to stem the Levantines' human and mercantile overflow from crowding Gentile Venice, ordered the Ghetto Vecchio to be shut in the same way that the Ghetto Nuovo of the German-Italian Jews had been shut these 24 years.

Fateful new order! It caused the old gate, which was between both Ghettoes, to be torn down, combining both places into one miserable thoroughfare. The new gate was built in the *Sottoportico* on the *Fondamenta del Cannaregio*, where the aperture still is. The old stone framework shows the large round holes where rested the hinges of the heavy wings of the portal of shame, a base and poor gate, low and square. No longer could a Spanish Jewess go for a walk to take the evening air on the field in front of San Geremia. . . . Nor, again, would a Spanish Jewess be visitable and accessible at dusk, nor seducible by a pursuer from outside, and therefore, no other Spanish Jewess would have the tragic destiny that now befell one who was the direct victim of the unusual



hazards arising from abruptly changing circumstances.

Of course, we know nothing definite of her fate. Would she have saved herself through baptism—a proud, religious soul who had not been invited to conversion by her Christian lover? Does it not seem inconceivable? Would she have been able to return to the Ghetto? Would her former neighbors, full of contempt and derision, have tolerated the discarded mistress of a Christian in their midst? How could she possibly have shown her face there? That Don Diego no longer mentioned her, after the new law went into effect, seems to be more than mere coincidence. Probably he was able to forget her so easily because she had, simply, disappeared.

## FOOTNOTES

1. Marcantonio Sabellico (*De situ Venetiae urbis*) reports in the 1490's that this Ghetto was a non-descript, scarcely inhabited quarter, with decrepit buildings left behind from an ancient cannon foundry which was long since removed to the site of the Arsenal. On the origin of the word "Ghetto" see also Cecil Roth, in *Romania*, v. 60, Paris, 1931.

2. The permit was subject to termination every few years, renewal depending each time on heavy financial tributes.

3. M. Sanudo, *Diarii*, v. 24, p. 45, March, 1516.

4. Later in life he wrote the *Lazarillo de Tormes* and the *Guerra de Granada*.

5. Letter of Galceran Capello to Cobos, May 10, 1540; pub. in Gonzalez Palencia y Mele, *Vida y obras de Don Diego Hurtado de Mendoza*, Madrid, v. 1, pp. 283, 284.

6. Letter of Don Diego to Cobos, April 8, 1540; pub. in *ibid.*, v. 3, pp. 276, 277.

7. Don Diego to Cobos, Dec. 4, 1539; pub. in *Romanic Studies*, v. 10, Yale, pp. 20, 21.

8. August 5, 1540; pub. in Gonz. Pal., op. cit., v. 3, pp. 285, 286.

9. Nov. 24, 1540; *ibid.*, pp. 291-293.

10. See on this question the article "Nobleza," in the *Encyclopedia Universal Ilustrada*, ed. Espana Calpe.

11. Don Diego to Cobos, August 16, 1540; pub. in Gonz. Pal., op. cit., v. 3, p. 288.

12. August 28, 1540; *ibid.*, p. 289.

13. Sept. 1, 1540; *ibid.*

14. See note 9.

15. Cobos to Don Diego, Feb. 1, 1540; in Gonz. Pal., op. cit., v. 3, pp. 297-299.

16. Don Diego to Cobos, Jan. 29, 1541; *ibid.*, p. 297.

17. "The greatest part of all merchandise now incoming from the Balkan states is owned by the Levantine traveling merchants" — from *Venetian City Annals*, 1541.

18. Don Diego to Cobos, March 12, 1541; in Gonz. Pal., op. cit., v. 3, pp. 299, 300.

19. In Gonz. Pal., v. 1, p. 136, this letter is mentioned and wrongly dated as being from April 8, 1542, while actually it can only be from 1541, as the following will reveal. The letter is published in full in v. 3 as Appendix XXXVIII, p. 320.

20. Don Diego to Cobos, May 19, 1541; in Gonz. Pal., op. cit., v. 3, p. 302.

21. May 29, 1541; *ibid.*, pp. 303, 304.

22. June 30, 1541; *ibid.*, pp. 304-306.

23. "Tibio en amores no sea yo jamás,  
Frio o caliente en fuego todo ardido. . ."  
(From poem by Mendoza, in *Obras Poéticas*, ed. Knapp, Madrid, 1877.)

24. Don Diego to Cobos, Jan. 29, 1542; in *Romanic Studies*, v. 10, p. 85.

25. See Cecil Roth, *History of the Jews in Venice*, Philadelphia, 1930.



Pueblo Squaw

N. P. STEINBERG



# Newspapers

(Translated from the Yiddish by Moshe Spiegel)

By ZALMAN SHNEOUR

## I

ONCE UPON A TIME, in the "good old days"—some ten or twenty years ago, let's say—the people in Shklov still did not know what newspapers really were like. Their sole source of news was a solitary issue of the *Hamelitz* (Hebrew daily), to which the apothecary subscribed. Willy-nilly the Jews in the little town had to quaff from this dubious source. Lacking an *ethrog* (citron), one pronounces a benediction over a potato.

Passing through so many Shklovian hands, the shopworn news of the *Hamelitz* became rather thoroughly provincialized. When the Prince of Wales paid a visit to Marienbad, the people in Shklov already knew, for a certainty, that he had been overpowered by a hankering for Jewish stuffed fish, for which the kosher restaurants of Marienbad are celebrated. When Tolstoi began familiarizing himself with Hebrew legends, Shklov immediately ferreted out the fact that the Count had already reached the Talmudic tractate *Berachoth* and that, any day now, he was going to embrace the Jewish faith. When Rothschild was all set to make a loan to the Turks, the little town of Shklov grasped that what the financier had in view was to buy back Palestine. All the charts of the General Military Staff and all the political situations were adumbrated point by point by the politicians of Shklov as clearly as if they had everything in the palms of their hands. Each finger represented a sovereign state; each line in their palms, a fortress-guarded river. Between the afternoon prayer service of *mincha* and the evening prayer of *maariv* sundry beards, gray and rumpled, bent over the geographic palm of the moderator of the forum; there, by the gray light dribbling in through the window, did they search for national frontiers

and the destinies of sovereign states. But, at the very height of the debate, with the twinkling of the first little star against the somber sky and the glimmering of the first small lamp in the impoverished synagogue in the backwoods of Lithuania, there would come the abrupt slam on the reading stand at the pulpit and the voice of the cantor soared up from the altar and diffused itself with a strange sadness:

"And He, the Merciful One, shall forgive us our transgressions and shall not destroy us. . . ."

The sovereign states dissipated like smoke; the fish of the Prince of Wales lost its Jewish tang, the millions of Rothschild lost their value. The politicians, who had been so heated in their debate, began to chime in with the cantor, their voices sounding ever so rapt in the semi-darkness:

"Help us, O Lord! The King of Heaven will respond to us in the hour we call upon Him. . . ."

And then there arose a hero, a man with but one hand, who dwelt in the neglected little town of Shklov. He had been a cobbler but, having lost a hand, had been forced to give up his trade. Now he put forth, as it were, the palm of his remaining hand (the right one) and, like Peter the Great, broke a window through into Europe, letting a veritable torrent of newspapers rush into the little town. Thenceforth the newspapers passed from the keeping of isolated individuals and became common property. The desiccated hands of the synagogue politicians lost their geographical value; they were unable to withstand the competition of the maps that were printed in the newspapers in connection with each important political event.

However, although the reading of Yiddish newspapers had now become a necessity in

Shklov, the reading of newspapers in the Russian language still remained a luxury, a caste-mark of the intelligentsia, a symbol of importance tantamount, for instance, to stopping the Inspector of Police on the street for a chat. You could even read a Russian newspaper upside down, if you liked—it did not really matter.

Then, from the day Russian newspapers costing a kopek appeared in Shklov, this luxury became a cheap one. Uncle Uri, too, God be thanked, could allow himself such a pleasure, and that not merely on account of public prestige, but also for the sake of being able, once every two weeks or so, to share with Aunt Feiga some conversation about the things they were writing about in the papers. Uncle Uri, now, was one man who surely knew how to handle a Russian newspaper. After all, he had once lived for half a year in Moscow—from whence he had been expelled.

## II

But before Uncle Uri sits down to the perusal of his newspaper, you must be introduced to the man who sells the papers, and told just how he came to be like one of the family at the home of Uncle Uri.

There was, in Shklov, a Jewish shoemaker; they called him Mutteh—a naive little Jew he was, and a cobbler. One day he happened to run a rusty awl into his left hand; his hand became all swollen; he went with it from doctor to doctor until—may this never befall any Jew!—it was cut off for him. And this man, this Mutteh, came home from the county hospital without a left hand. All through that day he sat there by his neglected cobbler's bench without a word, and with glazed eyes stared at his battered lasts. The awl was there; so was the waxed thread; so were the hammer and pegs; and when it came to holes in Jewish soles, there was no shortage of them either—but as for a left hand, it was no longer there. All that remained for him was to seek relief from the community or to go begging from door to door.

But then, the Lord actually sends the cure before the affliction—and, even so, He

had created newspapers before Mutteh had lost his hand. The wide, swishing waves of newsprint had been surging for a number of years from the centers of government into the towns and settlements. Locust swarms of inky words had come flying, bearing everywhere an echo of world-wide sensations, the hum of great cities, the nervous buzzing of recent days—but into Shklov itself they had as yet been unable to penetrate; they had always been forced to bypass Shklov's traditions, its little houses of wood and its boggy roads, and had veered off. Things had gone on like that until one-winged Mutteh got up from his battered, dusty cobbler's bench and diverted the paper torrent into the tiny town.

One fine day the people suddenly beheld Mutteh, with his childlike blue eyes, and his snippy little beard, gray and rumpled, carrying some sort of a square bundle under his half-amputated arm. The bundle was wrapped up in a red bandana. Now, what could a Jew like Mutteh be distributing?

Quietly, like a beggar, he dropped in at every house and offered for sale a paper—written in Russian or Yiddish. The newspapers were, truth to tell, as much in keeping with Mutteh's appearance as a rifle in the hands of a *melamed*, but what can you do when you know the Jew, and he has a hand missing? You take his newspaper and give him a copper for it. The newspaper itself lies around for a day or two until you get a chance to look it over.

That's how, little by little, the people in the town began getting used to the printed sheets, and if Mutteh failed to show up they actually missed him and, as time went by, his clients would have a bone to pick with him when he did appear at last!

"What's all this, Mutteh? Wherever did you disappear to yesterday? Why, we're right up to the point in the serial where they're dragging the girl to the harem!"

Thus did Mutteh's popularity increase from day to day; his beggarly peddling had turned into a mission, into a spiritual need for the little town, and his old, patched, sheepskin coat was now replaced by a new

overcoat with a velvet collar. No longer did Mutteh conceal his newspapers in a bandana, as if they were contraband; he took to distributing them openly and with pride, and dropped in at all the best homes with all the free-and-easy airs of a marriage-broker. He called out his wares in the street: "Fellow Jews, buy a *Friend* to bring home, or get a bit of *Life*, or buy a *Day*, or a *Northie*—" the last being a coined contraction, peculiar to Mutteh, of the *North-Western Region*. And, from time to time, he himself took a look at the "ink spots."

By now Mutteh was a hero. God alone knows where he got the combination of a pair of dandified, narrow trousers and a cap embroidered with the reddish bands of a clerk in some unknown branch of the government. To Mutteh's taste this was the most appropriate get-up for a Jewish newsdealer. The little town at once accepted this mixed attire: if a newsdealer dressed that way, it followed that that was the way for a newsdealer to dress.

Exactly at five in the afternoon, after the delivery of the mail, the housewives would already be looking out of their windows to see if Mutteh was coming with the folded newspapers under the stump of his left arm. When he did arrive, he was met halfway. The common folk bought the Yiddish papers and paid cash, while the home-owners bought the Russian ones, and on credit.

When Mutteh dropped in at the home of Uncle Uri, Auntie Feiga would come out to meet him, buy her kopeck paper and then place it on the bureau. There these Russian papers would accumulate, without being looked at for weeks at a time. Auntie Feiga herself was content to hear the most important news from the dealer:

"Well, Reb Mutteh, what's the latest?"

By this time Mutteh had got used to relieving his steady customers from the extra work of actually reading the papers. Before setting out on his deliveries, he would skim the cream of the news, which he would then impart to his clients.

"Well, now, in Warsaw, it says here, a mother and three children had their throats

cut and in the morning, it says here, they were found dead. . . ."

Ever since Mutteh had begun selling papers, a score or so of Russian words had battered their way into his head, and he was using them in season and out. With his "It says here" he was trying to express himself in really high-class style, but just who or what was actually saying all these things was something no one could make out.

"Oi, may woes pass me by!" Auntie Feiga moans, after Mutteh has told her the newest item. She shakes her head and props up her cheek with two fingers.

"And in Riga, it says here—" Mutteh the newsdealer proceeds to throw a still greater scare into her, making a decisive sweep with the stump of his arm—"in Riga they're figuring on marching out with red 'symphonies' on the nineteenth of August—that's what them 'Soshalists' are figuring. So it says here, if they do march, they'll be ground to dust and powder. . . ."

"They shouldn't go butting in where they don't belong," Auntie Feiga doesn't lose her presence of mind. "Hear anything about the war?"

"China is rioting—there's a republic coming. So, it says here, if they're met up with, blood will flow in the streets, it says here. . . ."

"Where is that?" Auntie Feiga becomes frightened.

"In China," says Mutteh, with a nod in the direction of China.

"What a world this is, to be sure," says Auntie Feiga and takes her fingers away from her cheek. Just what has gotten into China to be acting up like that is something she cannot grasp, but she goes on standing there, just the same, ready to fulfill her duty of absorbing the latest news. As for Mutteh, he goes right on with his speech, and makes sure his client is supplied with all the necessary data:

"And in Moscow, it says here, twenty Jewish merchants of the Second Guild were put out of the city; so if they should come back, it says here, why. . . ." At this point Mutteh makes an exceedingly wide sweep with his stump and words fail him. How-

ever, Auntie Feiga has grasped on her own what sort of a catastrophe there would be if these twenty merchants of the Second Guild should come back to Moscow; she sighs deeply and repeatedly, half out of pity, half for the looks of the thing.

Having dished out his portion of news, Mutteh takes off his cap with its trimming of some unknown governmental department, says goodbye, kisses the tiny scroll on the lintel of the door, and makes his exit. A minute or so later, you can hear his assured voice piping at another door:

"So it says here, if, it says here—" and the tale begins all over again.

The sheets of the *Kopeck Gazette* lie on the bureau, accumulating from day to day, and assuring the whole household of a supply of paper and of stoppers for the bottles of Sabbath wine, and yet there always remains a plentiful store of it. Should Auntie Feiga, in a huffy mood, notice this growing heap of newspapers, she will start yelling at the children:

"You rascals, you loafers. At first they give you no rest: 'Buy a paper, mamma—mamma, buy a paper!'—so's you might think that the only thing they do is read newspapers. But nothing of the sort! Just a lot of money thrown out of the window. There, tomorrow I'll stop buying the papers."

On the morrow, however, Mutteh arrives with a bundle of fresh newspapers, redolent of ink, says hello in his broken Russian, and launches into a recital of the news—dealing with Samara, with Berlin, with the Duma, and with Japan. All you hear is "If, it says here," and "It says here that, without fail." Auntie Feiga's wrath dissipates like smoke, and another news-sheet, practically fresh off the press, is lying on top of the others on the bureau.

### III

At midnight, in a great city, the linotypes clatter and the rotary presses rumble; metal pours through the matrices, enormous rolls of newsprint revolve. Workers in the graphic trades, men and women, sweating and cov-

ered with graphite dust, their eyes bloodshot and sleepy, are exerting their last bit of strength by tinted electric bulbs—and all this to the end that Uncle Uri may have a fresh news-sheet lying on his bureau and be able to throw a condescending squint at it from a distance. True, at times he will tap the pile of newspapers and say to himself: "I ought to read these"—only to settle down to his Mishna or his Hasidic *Holy Sayings*.

But, just the same, the one fine day comes at last, and Uncle Uri gets up from his postprandial siesta in an especially exalted spiritual mood—for the sole purpose of reading the Russian newspapers. One bearded cheek is rumpled and reddened, while the beard on the other is bristling: one can easily tell which side he has been sleeping on. He rinses his mouth, tossing his head quite energetically as he does so, then calls out in a re-invigorated voice:

"Feiga, get the samovar going!"

The samovar is lighted and, until it warms up, Uncle Uri leans on the ledges of the small window.

"Feiga, my wife," he sings out, "give me something from over there, a newspaper or something."

Auntie Feiga walks up to the bureau, fully prepared to help her husband in such an impulsive spiritual undertaking. The children's schoolbooks and notebooks are on top of the newspapers; Auntie Feiga thrusts two fingers into the pile: which news-sheet she draws out will be the one that gets read. The date on the paper makes no difference—nor does the month, for that matter.

"There!" Auntie Feiga brings the paper over to Uncle Uri. "So you've gotten around to reading the papers at last."

"I can tell you have lots of time," Uncle Uri remarks in a tone implying that he himself is actually occupied day and night. At the same time, he saddles his nose with spectacles, making them just out in a way that is somehow oddly strained, solemn. . . . His squinting eyes behind the old-fashioned



lenses become large and profound: it's actually frightening merely to look at them.

Uncle Uri begins with the name of the masthead, then plunges into the terms of subscription—by the year, half-year, month—and makes certain calculations:

"Feiga," he shouts to his wife in the kitchen, "how much do you pay for the paper? A kopeck a day? Well, look here: you can subscribe for a whole year for three roubles. So what kind of a bargain are we getting? We'd be better off subscribing. There, Zhama gets it that way every day from St. Petersburg, with his address all in print: 'To Mr. . . .' Looks impressive."

"So go ahead and subscribe," Feiga's voice answers him from the kitchen.

"If God grants me health I, with God's help, will subscribe, so's to get the paper directly from St. Petersburg."

Having made this promise, Uncle Uri now buckles down to the job. As far as actual reading is concerned, Uncle Uri does read, but only the headlines in their bold type—this comes easiest of all to him. As for the tiny Russian characters that are strewn like black poppy seed under these headlines, well, he's afraid even to make a start on them. During his annual attendance at the fair at Nizhnii Novgorod, Uncle Uri usually reads a goodish number of shop signs; the newspaper headlines have very much the same look to him as those soiled notices: there you have *FURS*, *FISH*, *MACHINERY*, *SUGAR*; here you have *BOMBS*, *SCANDAL*, *MURDER*, *WARS*. Whatever the headlines fail to state fully he supplements from his own imagination.

Uncle Uri reads the heading of the leading editorial—two words from the text, and the third his own, in explanation:

"'We have no de-sire to en-en-dure, endure, hun-hun-ger, hunger.' That means, 'We have no desire to endure hunger.' You hear that, Feiga?" he shouts to his wife in the kitchen.

"I hear you," Auntie Feiga answers and pauses for a moment in the doorway of the dining room, where Uncle Uri is reading.

"'We have no desire to endure hunger!'" proclaims Uncle Uri and looks at her from behind his old-fashioned spectacles with those frightening, magnified eyes. "Let there be an end to hunger! They have sucked our blood long enough! That's well written, and the man is right."

"'Bomb dis-dis-covered in Nizhnii Novgorod,'" Uncle Uri reads the second headline. "'Bomb discovered in Nizhnii Novgorod.' You hear that, Feiga?" he immediately shouts to his spouse, who is busy with the samovar. "There, they've started throwing bombs again in Nizhnii. And who do you think they'll pick on? The Jews at the fair, of course. . . . Lord, have mercy on us!"

Auntie Feiga's faint sigh reaches him from the kitchen, as a sign that she has heard the news.

Uncle Uri reads on:

"'Ri-riot-ing in To-ky-o.' There you are! They're rioting again. You hear that, Feiga? Great riots in Tokyo. They're fighting, killing—the whole world is turning upside down there. God knows how this will end. Yes, sir!"

The news concerning the riots in Tokyo Auntie Feiga has already heard from Mutteh the newsdealer, a considerable while back. Just the same, she willingly listens to it a second time and rejoices because her old husband (not to sin before God) understands, among other things, how to read Russian; he's all right; one can rely on him.

As for Uncle Uri, he plunges still deeper into his newspaper:

"'Dis-dis-sens-sions, dissensions among Allies!' Allies—that means the members of the Black Hundreds; that's what it means! You hear that, Feiga?"

"What's that about the Allies?" Feiga questions him from the kitchen.

"Dis-sensions. The devil alone can make out what they have scribbled there. What a nasty word! Where's our Talmudist? Doing his lessons? There, ask him now what dis-sensions means—let's see what he knows. . . ."



"He doesn't know," Auntie Feiga reports back a minute or so later. "He looked it up, he searched for it, he mumbled something—and he doesn't know."

"What's that? He doesn't know either? What's he studying for, in that case? Why, we pay his teacher three roubles a month, I think—we pay him, all right. It's just money thrown out!"

"It's money thrown out," Auntie Feiga concurs. But Uncle Uri chases away the fiasco of the news about dissensions with another headline:

"'Gran-Gran-diose, grandiose scan-dal in the Duma. . . .' There, Feiga, you hear that? There's another scandal in the Duma already. If they write that, it's a gran-diose scandal then, sure enough, it must be a scandal on a big scale—it's not just a small one. The foes of Israel there are again turning the world upside down. It must be that Pureshkevich again for sure—may his name and his memory be erased! Help, police! Whatever does he want from us, that goy? Pestering us like that. . . ."

Auntie Feiga brings the samovar to the table and steeps the tea, but Uncle Uri is still reading the headlines out loud. From them he passes on to the advertisements, and he shares everything with his wife:

"You hear, Feiga? They're looking for servants. A great find—they have to go looking for them, yet. Listen to this, Feiga—there are doctors begging for people to come to them for treatment—there, look for yourself! And yet our miserable second-class doctor is dissatisfied when you give him fifteen kopecks. You've got to hand him twenty kopecks, without fail, otherwise it's lowering his dignity! There, Zhama's daughter, of all people, wants to go away to study tooth-jerking. Yes, yes, she'll be about as lucky as a tabby cat. You can see for yourself, dentists are as plentiful as dogs here. Let's see—boarding houses . . . theaters . . . face powder. There's nothing worth while hearing here and nothing worth seeing. . . ."

Suddenly Uncle Uri's eye is arrested by the cut of a boot with *FINEST FOOT-*

*WEAR* bold lettered on the sole; and he shouts to Auntie Feiga:

"Feiga, Feiga—how much did we pay for the children's shoes, now? Four roubles a pair? An awful bargain: you can have a pair for three roubles, according to this. You're a fine manager, when you have the money. . . ."

"What are you picking on me for, now?" Auntie Feiga snarls back at him. "You feel like an accountant, maybe? There, you wanted tea, didn't you? So drink your teal You've done enough reading!"

Uncle Uri, in a temper, throws the Russian paper aside.

"It's no use talking to you! Better pour me a glass of tea."

Auntie Feiga pours an overflowing glass of tea for Uncle Uri, and hands him some raspberry jam to quiet his nerves, which have become frazzled from reading the paper. She replaces the paper on the bureau. On the morrow, and the day after, many more papers will be added to it—there will be plenty of paper for bottle-stoppers. And—who knows—a couple of weeks later, when Uncle Uri sits down again to read a paper, Auntie Feiga's two fingers may pull out the very same one which he has read and forgotten, and Uncle Uri will read the headlines all over again, one after the other. He will begin with the leading editorial: "We have no desire to endure hunger," read about the sizable scandal in the Duma, and will keep on telling Auntie Feiga all the news until, among the advertisements, he stumbles upon the cut of a boot; that's where he'll stop, mildly surprised and a little dissatisfied, and hurl the paper to the floor:

"There, it's always the same thing, day after day! There's nothing worth while hearing here, nothing worth seeing. Feiga, you'd better pour me a glass of teal!"

Just the same, if the Russian writers, pressmen, and compositors only knew how closely Uncle Uri studied their paper, they would perform their heavy labors still more sedulously and with a greater will, amid the insomniac nights of St. Petersburg. . . .

# The Two Worlds of Arnold Zweig

By LOTHAR KAHN

ARNOLD ZWEIG'S JEWISHNESS, as indeed his general *Weltanschauung*, was governed with singular force by the impact upon him of his experience in the first World War. His work of fiction centers almost exclusively about it. But more than the physical setting, World War I was to supply a series of shattering insights the effects of which were never to weaken. It instilled in him the view that war denied the very meaning of human existence; further, that only those who stood to benefit by it economically or psychologically—the greedy industrialist and the rabid militarist—wanted it, and, having the power, wished to perpetuate it. From here it was but one step to conclude that these same ruling groups were chiefly responsible for human inequities and could—and did—throw powerful blocks into the road of man's progress toward greater moral, social, and economic justice. Because the Jews had championed these constructive goals throughout their modern history, the perennial forces of power, joined in each epoch by other elements, saw in them the eternal and cursed enemy.

Paradoxically this tireless champion of peace and the oppressed found himself the darling and cooperative instrument of East Germany's intellectuals among whom he selected to live out his life. Inevitably, in the Western World which had once hailed him as an adept and vocal foe of war—in a class with Stefan Zweig and Romain Rolland—his prestige and reputation suffered, perhaps beyond repair. Despite his present eclipse, a casualty of political tensions, *The Case of Sergeant Grischa*, which first attracted world-wide attention for him, must still be regarded as the best all-round war novel of this century. It may suffice to secure him a niche in literary history.

Zweig's seemingly total conversion to Marxist Socialism cannot come as a total shock to those who have followed the nearly straight line of his intellectual evolution since 1916. But there had always been enough balance in Zweig, enough of the Western liberal tradition, to keep him from taking the final plunge. Even as, in the twenties and thirties he depicted in his fiction the conspiracies of industrialists and generals—even as he had thundered against exploitation of the masses, and registered his discontent with the feeble and fearful actions of Germany's liberal democracy—he had stoutly upheld the freedom and dignity of the individual, the security of his person, and the right to stand freely and fearlessly before other men and authority. Thus, when socio-economic concerns seemed to propel him eastward, political and philosophical considerations kept him rooted in the West. And above all, there seemed one pole to which he seemed firmly attached and whose presence is perceptible throughout his novels and non-fiction: his strong commitment to Jewishness and the Jewish people. Yet, as post-war events have clearly demonstrated, his attachment to this pole seemed less firm than his ties to a socialism which had turned ever more Marxist. Among the major European Jewish writers who survived the debacle of World War II, Zweig is the only one whose Jewishness suffered a decisive loss. It ebbed away to seeming nothingness as a more demanding commitment gradually took hold. Whether his marriage to Communism would have occurred without his disillusionment with Zionism remains problematical. But this marriage is not likely to be dissolved as was that of a Koestler or a Manes Sperber, younger men with different temperaments and to whom Communism was an idol of their youth.

But that Zweig always championed values highly treasured in the Jewish tradition emerges readily from his work. In the great works of the *Grischa* cycle—like those he later rehashed—Zweig almost hebraically places justice at the pinnacle of human virtues. His Eberhard Kroysing craves it in *Education Before Verdun*; his men of good will demand it in *Grischa*; his chief protagonist in all—Werner Bertin—who is but a thinly disguised Arnold Zweig, is deeply enough imbued with it to become emotionally ill over its absence. In fact, it is justice which is at once the ultimate source and the prime mover of Zweig's power as a novelist. At the same time, paradoxically, it is his chief failing as a political and social theoretician. For Zweig's sense of justice carries enough momentum to divide itself in two—with one facet clearly at war with the other. At times it appears in conflict with Zweig himself. Even as he seeks to present a uniform portrait of the vicious Prussian officer class, with its inborn feelings of superiority, its readily acquired anti-Semitism, its primeval militaristic instincts and values that place honor and position above all else, Zweig's inner sense of the true and right keeps him from painting a portrait of undiluted evil. Virtually oblivious to his obvious intent and preconception, Zweig seems compelled to project a von Lychow, an Eberhard Kroysing, a Paul Winfried. These aristocrats, their birth and demands of caste notwithstanding, are men of good will. With all their prejudices—and they largely share those of the *Junkers*—they place justice at the summit of human values. Nor are these decent officers exceptions in Zweig's twisted military universe, but representative German officers. If nevertheless the Stieffenzahns (Ludendorff), the Clausses (Hoffmann), and the Jantsches stand out, it is that these men embody what Zweig abhorred most not only in the military and war, but in human existence in general. Though Zweig undoubtedly had to speculate about the motivation and thought processes of these higher-ups in the military hierarchy—whereas he knew first-hand the thinking of the lower-ranked officers and

enlisted men—his Stieffenzahn, Clauss, and von Lychow are singularly powerful and well-delineated characters. Yet, significantly, Stieffenzahn is generally only talked about by others; he appears directly as an active character only in the novel about *Grischa*. There, in a truly memorable episode, he routs the venerable von Lychow with a series of shattering arguments, only to fall victim later to his own logic when he—the supreme commander of German forces—cannot prevent the execution of the Russian soldier he had ordered killed as a sacrifice to the needs of the German military machine.

A deep sense of compassion in Zweig's work supplements, rather than counteracts, his stress on justice. His genuine humanity does not dilute justice, but instead underscores it, bringing out its true power. Zweig's writing literally bursts at the seams as he sketches the inequities to which the front-line soldier is exposed by a wilful, self-preserving, irresponsible warrior class. Justice and compassion fuse into a powerful whole as Zweig has his simple soldier-symbol, *Grischa*, become enmeshed in the gears of a war machine from which even its drive can no longer extricate him. Again, his words crackle and vibrate as he outlines the indignities cast upon Eastern Jewry and the overt acts of anti-Semitism against the Jewish front-line soldier. His compassion, fortunately, never descends to maudlin sentimentalism, nor does it ever turn to mere anger. In his virile warmth and tenderness lie the other mainsprings of Zweig's convincingness as a writer.

There was little in Arnold Zweig's pre-1914 record to foreshadow either his later interests or intrinsic qualities. There was nothing to hint at the man in revolt, concerned with the destiny of the downtrodden, for whatever reason. Nothing suggested the ardent Marxist of his later days. World War I was the decisive turning point in his life. In the young man of 1914, to paraphrase slightly the title of a Zweig novel, only a keen psychological perceptiveness and equally deft handling of esthetic themes an-

nounced a capable writer of the future. Despite a commitment to Zionism, he was a semi-assimilated German Jew whose faith in Germanic culture was great and whose readiness to abide by the bourgeois values of his environment seemed beyond question.

\* \* \*

Arnold Zweig was born in an upper Silesian village in 1887, the son of a middle-class saddler-master who had remained loyal to the ancestral Jewish traditions. When Arnold was barely ten, he learned at first hand of the burdens of anti-Semitism. Zweig's father, upon his marriage to an upper middle-class girl, had abandoned his saddler's trade to enter the grain and feed business. Suddenly, in the 1890's, he saw his business destroyed by anti-Jewish legislation which excluded Jews from supplying the armed forces with agricultural produce. The older Zweig was forced out of business and compelled to fall back upon his erstwhile trade. There can be little question that the episode, much discussed at home, left some impression upon the growing youth. At some sacrifice, his parents sent him to the Gymnasium and, between 1907 and 1914, he attended, in the manner of the time, a half dozen German universities. Initially interested in philology, he was later to find the field arid, and he transferred his studies to philosophy, economics, and psychology. His first major publishing effort came in 1909 with the appearance of *Aufzeichnungen über eine Familie Klopfer* (Notes about a Family Named Klopfer). According to Morit Goldstein, writing in 1926, this book already suggested Zweig's future striving for absorption in things Jewish and European, i. e. international.<sup>1</sup> Peter Klopfer, Zweig's first fictional alter ego, is an ardent Zionist whose Jewish national convictions lead him to the shores of Palestine. It was Zweig's second novel, *Novellen um Claudia*, which first attracted nation-wide attention.

1. Gustav Krojanker, editor. *Juden in der Deutschen Literatur*. Sonderdruck für den Heine-Bund, 1926, pp. 241-251.

In this book, so different from all others, Zweig peers unashamedly into a bridal chamber in which an inhibited Claudia gradually yields to her primeval instincts. Although Goldstein has seen in the over-refined, cultured, somewhat precious Claudia a Jewish type, this is Zweig's only novel (with the exception of those penned after 1948) which does not dwell on Jews and their problems. But in two plays soon to follow, *Abigail* and *Ritual Murder in Hungary*, Zweig not only returned to Jewish themes, but in the latter treated them with an aggressiveness not previously found among Jewish publicists. The stage version of an actual contemporary incident—an accusation of ritual murder in Hungary—insists that Jewish suffering must no longer be taken passively, but fought with vigor and determination. *Das Ostjüdische Antlitz* (The Face of Eastern Jewry) was to set him sharply apart from other German-Jewish intellectuals, ashamed and afraid of showing off the poor relatives from the East. Zweig portrayed warmly and sympathetically the lives of Polish and Russian Jewry, themes to which he was frequently to return. To be sure, as an emancipated, educated Western Jew, Zweig could not fully identify himself with his impoverished Eastern cousins, but he felt with them at all times a solidarity that was a prerequisite to his Zionism.

Had his work ended here, it is doubtful that Zweig would be remembered. It took *The Case of Sergeant Grischa* to stamp his name indelibly on the face of world literature. Reflecting his experiences as a non-combatant soldier before Verdun—which, to use his own words—gave him his first direct view into human society, the novel first showed a helpless human being being ground to death by an impersonal, merciless machine of war. It was a depressing view, yet constructive in its virulent anti-war, anti-militaristic, trans-national point of view. But it was also a set of values which early made him a target of the attacks of German nationalists everywhere. Unperturbed by the abuse which was heaped upon him by the



German Right, he was to describe himself as follows:

He [Zweig] . . . had underscored, even from his first book on, that here was a Jew writing in the German tongue who would not let anyone prescribe any limits for him; in a book, *Caliban or Politics and Passion* in 1926, he tried to make clear . . . his attitude as a conscious Jew and Zionist, as a European intellectual and German writer.

All this was flaunting the elements rising to power in Germany which he was to describe and expose in *Young Woman of 1914*, *Education Before Verdun*, and *Crowning of a King*.<sup>2</sup> When these forces assumed power under the Nazis, Zweig had little choice but to emigrate at once. Where other writers selected France, Switzerland, or the United States as their new home, Zweig chose Palestine. Here he wrote what critics labeled a weak and inconclusive novel on the Arab-Jewish struggle, *De Vriendt Goes Home*. Later events were to show that this novel actually marked the beginnings of his doubts about Jewish "nationalism" and was, in fact, the crossroads of Zweig's Jewish development. In between novels he evolved a long and courageous tract on German Jewry, *Bilanz des deutschen Judentums* (*Balance-Sheet of German Jewry*). But apparently life in exile, even in the Palestine he had wished so for a Jewish home, proved arduous and difficult to bear for a European intellectual who was no longer young. In the late forties he returned to Germany where the Eastern intellectual elite welcomed him with open arms, making of him a veritable showcase of intellectual prowess. Here he finally was to dedicate himself exclusively to the struggle for peace, and there can be little doubt that Zweig was utterly sincere in this desire for many years. There seems equally little doubt that he believed in the peace maneuvers emanating from Mos-

cow. As he sought salvation from the religion of Communism, he lost his interest in his erstwhile religion. A closer look at Zweig's views on Jews and "the Jewish question" may point to an explanation of the victory of Marx over Herzl.

\* \* \*

Zweig's theoretic exposition on Jewry is to be found chiefly in *Caliban* and *Bilanz*, and in essays that have appeared in journals over the years. His less conscious views are mirrored in the Grischka novels, which are heavily populated with Jews. They appear in uniform and civilian garb as business magnates and craftsmen, as religious and irreligious people, as lovers and loved. But his Jewish characters have much in common: they are nearly all depicted as morally firm and dedicated, courageous and wise—wonderful specimens, on the whole, of mankind. With the exception of the Wahls—Bertin's parents-in-law—whose bourgeois values and empty assimilationism annoy him, all his major Jewish characters are almost ideally good. In this idealization is reflected a reaction to the growing wave of anti-Semitism, a backdrop against which some of the novels were written. This, of course, stamps Zweig as a Jewish publicist, an impression which gains strength as one examines at length the anti-Semite projected on his canvas, Zweig does not hesitate to resort to anachronistic characterization where necessary to his goal. Although several of the Grischka novels deal with pre-1914 settings, others with the war itself (many written, however, only in the thirties), and still others with the 1920's, Zweig injects into them Nazi-like creatures with a viciously racial anti-Semitism. In the 1930's each successive new novel suggests an increasing tendency to subordinate his artistic concerns to those of the Jewish publicist. Where Zweig creates a Jewish character, he does so to have him plead—plead for and with him against his enemies and detractors.

Zweig, in fact, equates Jews with all the values he holds dear. To be sure, in theory

2. Although these novels relate events which partly occurred before the Grischka episode, they were all written many years after *The Case of Sergeant Grischka*. These books, as well as several others written since 1945, constitute the so-called Grischka cycle. The most recent volumes describe German society in the years preceding World War I.



he disclaims special virtues for them—and he considers geniuses of the type of Einstein, Freud, and Bergson individual phenomena, almost outside the Jewish group. But then, in practice, he proceeds to commend them. It is the Jews who have subordinated material concerns to those of the intellect—they have listened more to the scholar than to the man of wealth. Owing to their long cultural history, their Mediterranean origin—which Zweig again and again chooses over a Northern one—and their development in the nineteenth century, Jews have developed an intellectual force and vigor which have specifically influenced the *Weltbild*. Together with the Arabs, the Jews (in other words, a kind of Semitic mind) have unveiled a special capacity for the abstract and for mathematics in particular. As visible proof of the creative energy of Jews, Zweig produces an endless list of German-culture heroes of Jewish origin. It is they—and other Jews—who have always militated against war and the use of force; since time immemorial, Jews have demonstrated respect for the worth of the individual, for the preservation also of the cultural heritage of all peoples. Throughout history they have been aligned against all barbaric retrogression. The German Jew, with the unique opportunities opening up for him in the past century, promised by 1933 to become the prime representative of the Western European on the German intellectual scene.

Zweig, who in his books on the Jewish question addressed himself mainly to Gentile readers, is bewildered that a people with such distinguished traditions—which perhaps more than others had earned the right to survive—should yet have been singled out for continued attempts at destruction. As an explanation for this phenomenon Zweig evolves certain psycho-sociological concepts of prejudice, many of which were to find favor in the United States in the post-war years. A form of ethno-centrism—or the *Zentralitätsaffekt*—with all its corollaries and implications, has made the Jews a perennial

minority, subject to the whims of the dominant groups. But Zweig realizes that other groups have constituted minorities over periods of time without encountering the persecutions that have befallen the Jews. One of the very specific answers, Zweig suggests, must be found in the very contributions Jews have made to civilization. Endowed with a powerful tradition of justice and Zedaka, and being a progressive people with democratic leanings, the Jews have again and again offended the ruling classes who could not, and would not, believe in these standards. In fact, the Jews, who stood for civic liberty, intellectual progress, love of peace—values firmly entrenched in their tradition—became the very symbol of all they hated. This, of course, is not Zweig's sole explanation of the nature of anti-Semitism, but it synthesized well the views of an ardently national-minded Jew and of a budding Marxist.

Zweig belongs to those who discerned in the attitudes toward the Jew a test of the maturity of a given civilization. To use his own words, "... one defended civilization when one defended the Jews." In 1934, he wrote, "The German is as he behaves toward the Jews ... a warning to everyone ... our [Jewish] weakness is the measuring stick of the real maturity and strength of the others." This was Zweig's warning during the opening years of the Nazi epoch that anti-Semitism was as dangerous to the Gentile as to himself.

Because history is replete with examples of retrogression—of which Hitlerism seemed an especially potent example—Zweig judged the Jewish future to be insecure. The Jew is entirely too suitable a victim of ethnocentric sentiment. To those nurtured on it, the Jew can be at once capitalist and freemason, all in the same person; he is mysteriously, intellectually superior, diabolical in his cleverness. At the same time, he is conveniently devoid of power and yet suspected of having a great deal of it; he lives in one's country and yet has international links; he is a strange, accursed, visible figure,

yet has been suspected by people since time immemorial. Jews are the victims of hundreds of fairy tales and horror stories; they are, moreover, the product of centuries of religious and social apartness; they are the embodiment of the Eternal Jew.

For Zweig the Nazis were merely the latest (in the thirties) to exploit the particular vulnerability of the Jew. There would be others after them! The chief lesson of the Hitlerite episode, as he saw it in its early phases, was the illusion of the German Jew's security, his reliance upon human rights and education, his faith in constitutions and written documents. How easy it proved to abrogate the emancipation agreement with the Jews and to restore the medieval Jewish situation, with "modern" methods of persecution merely superimposed. But this emancipation had never gone as deep as Jews had hoped. The fact, so long forgotten, that it had been granted to Jews as individuals and not to Jewry as a whole—and not for the sake of Jewry, but almost in spite of it—began to re-assert itself in this period of ultra-reaction.

Zionism—the establishment of a Jewish home and state—seemed to Zweig the most obvious and pressing solution. He had been a disciple long before Hitler's rise had hardened his conviction. Zweig saw no conflict between his Jewish nationalism, his pronounced general opposition to nationalism—the Grischas books were virulently opposed to it in all its forms—and his firm commitment to the international idea. The Zionist species at that time seemed different. He compared it then to the liberal nationalism of the early 19th century—an aspiration to statehood characterized by the desire of a group with reasonably common background to determine its own common destiny. Any segment of the human species, Zweig felt, could be assured of continued existence and progress when it lived on its own soil, without foreign domination, naturally and without doubts or complexes, and concerned with the free development of the group self. Zionist nationalism is based on this

assumption. He then saw it essentially unaggressive in nature, not rooted, like the integral nationalism of the late 19th century, in any tribal or racist notions. Nor was it encumbered by any romantic or mystic trappings. Zionism is a response to the self-preservation instinct of the Jews, but it will tend to secure also future Jewish productivity. For Jewish creative potential to be realized, it will require its own territory, its own language, in order to facilitate communication among the immigrants. Zweig uses the term productivity in the physical-economic sense in which Israel has already established a modest reputation. He does not comment on the likely effect the stress on physical productivity will have on Jewish intellectual productivity, especially as the pressures of exile and conflict diminish.

Like most other writers, Zweig envisioned the Jewish home state as a distinct psychological boon. In the Diaspora he has observed the Jew's lack of naturalness, his self-consciousness, even his self-hate. Too often he found him a man at war with himself, internally torn, undirected—now leaning toward the rejection of his Jewish heritage, now anxious to reintegrate it. A new land of his own would tend to normalize the Jewish situation by aligning the Jews with other peoples having their own soil and nation.

But as Zweig looked at Western—including American—Jewries, he felt that they did not then have the shape of a people or nation. There were still elements to unite them, but the Jewries had taken on too much the habits, ways, and general colorings of the host people. To Zweig—and here it is hard to agree with him—a Jewish Frenchman was no more distinguished from the dominant Frenchman than a Breton, Norman, or Provençal. But assimilated though the Jews were, their status was still that of an essentially unprotected minority. With a Jewish state they would have, not legally, but psychologically, the status of naturalized citizens or of men constituting a national minority. A Jewish state would require rec-

ognition in Europe of the Jews as a people and would strengthen their position.

In adopting this view Zweig veered sharply from the opinions of German intellectual Jews who, ever fearful of their position as Germans, wanted to talk low as Jews. Of them Zweig painted a glowing portrait of achievement as intellectuals, but a considerably darker one as Jews. They considered themselves Germans; Jews they were merely by religion and by ancestry or birth. Zweig is alternately amused and horrified by those German Jews whose unfairness to other peoples extended to the Jews of other lands. So deeply imbedded was their German ethno-centrism that not even murder of fellow-Jews or persecution and defamation by Germans could basically shake their faith in German ways and institutions. In Palestine, where Germanic judgments of superiority were applied to Eastern Jews, the situation was especially ludicrous and painful. Zweig, always partial to Eastern Jews, may have conceded the latter's "inferiority" in accepted European manners, polish, and correctness, but placed higher than this external distinction the Polish or Russian Jew's humanity, capacity for work, and spirit of sacrifice.

Because of his pathological stress on *Deutschtum*—which permeated all layers of Jewish society from Zionists to religious Jews, to Jews-in-name only—the German Jew was unable to live with himself as a Jew. Herein lay his real tragedy. Totally devoid of any positive notions about Judaism, he considered it no more than a cross to bear. Yet, because of family ties and the perennial threat of anti-Semitism, he hedged over the final step of conversion. Hence he hated his Jewishness and often he hated himself. Because of the psychological factor especially, Zweig dwelt at length on the need for positive Jewish education for all children. Again Jewish national reconstitution would tend to facilitate this task.

Zweig thus envisaged in the 1930's a Jewish liberal nationalism which was based on

the psychological, social, and political needs of the Jews and which were entirely consonant with his international, humanitarian, and pacifist ideals. He anticipated no real clash between his Jewish-national and generally anti-national thinking. Yet, not too long after, there appeared the first signs of doubt. The murder of Dr. Arlosorof and certain other policies and actions in Palestine made him wonder if Jewish nationalism would pass the acid test.<sup>3</sup> His one Palestinian novel, *De Vriendt Goes Home*, which relates the murder of a conciliatory Jew (Arlosorof), shows him remarkably friendly to the Arabs and sets him apart from the more rabid Zionism of other Jews. Policies of the Jischuw in succeeding years—and he admits that the Jischuw blandly ignored his protests—indicated a trend toward the tribalism he had so condemned in Europe.

Owing partly to the inability of an aging European writer to thrive on foreign soil, to his personal disappointment in Jischuw policies, his increasingly Marxist socialism, Zweig gradually put physical and intellectual distance between Israel and himself. Jewish salvation, he began to feel, had to be sought not in the Jewish national idea as it was developing, but in the broader solution of a socialist world that is, a more meaningful social order which would bring about liberation from the vicious circle of national and individual egoisms. This socialist foundation was also the prerequisite for the extirpation of anti-Semitism, itself the result of group selfishness and ethno-centrism. With social-

3. As Zweig wrote to me: "Even then [in 1932] the Zionist solution seemed conceivable to me only on a democratic-socialist basis and so I belonged since its foundation to Hapoel Hazair. My friendship with Dr. Ch. Arlosorof dated back to student days. . . . Arlosorof was murdered by Jewish terrorists of ultranationalist viewpoints, because he was striving for a reasonable solution of Jewish-Arab relations through negotiations with the then Emirship of Transjordan. After my arrival in Jaffa, on December 21, 1933, I immediately tried to illuminate this murder and its motives and to prove the responsibility of the supporters of the Jabotinski wing of Zionism. . . ."

ism would also come the softening of tribal instincts.

The Jewish history of Arnold Zweig is a tragic one. He had never been attracted to Judaism as a religion, an abnegation he had felt since childhood days. Nevertheless he had been closely identified with the Jewish people to whom he once felt a strong and unmistakable loyalty. Through a Zionism of the stamp of Hapoel Hazair he had fought for Jewish land as the main hope for normalization of Jewish life. Then, to use his words, the road to Zion proved an illusion. The policies of the new state of Israel totally repelled him as his hope for Jewish-Arab co-existence disappeared. With no religious attachments to hold him to Judaism, with his loyalty to the Zionist cause turned to bitterness, Zweig's detachment from Jewish questions—and the Jewish people—became virtually complete. That his total embrace of Marxism was a cause of this detachment—as well as the result—can hardly be subject to question.

Yet how Zweig, so strong an advocate of political freedoms—see his condemnation of the Nazis for violating them—could defend the Communist brand of socialism is hard to comprehend. Personal motives, aside, it could only be that the author of *Grischa*—the inveterate foe of war—was completely taken in by the Russian stress on peace, seeing here its main proponents. All his pro-Communist writings—and as one of the literary Czars of East Germany they abound—extol the Eastern emphasis on peace as opposed to Western sabre-rattling.

How Zweig felt about the Soviet Doctor's Plot and other known persecutions of Jews—and how he reconciled these with the Marxist-Socialist solution—is difficult to say. If he was troubled by Soviet policy, his later position would preclude any expression of protest. If he was as truly removed from Jewish problems as he indicated, it must have been a difficult decision to make—and one born largely of acrimony. But the possibility also exists that a tired old man de-

cided on peace and tranquility at almost any price, wishfully closing his eyes to unpleasant realities—realities which once he had so courageously faced.



*Solace in Prayer*

MOISSAYE MARANS



# from Sages, Chroniclers, and Scribes

*Within the limitations of space assigned to this project, writings and memorabilia centuries old will be published and experiences will be depicted which were of vast and primary importance in the little-remembered, long-ago annals of Jewry and other minorities.—Editor.*

## LADY MONTEFIORE'S IMPRESSIONS OF JERUSALEM\*

THERE IS NO CITY in the world which can bear comparison in point of interest with Jerusalem—fallen, desolate, and abject, even as it appears—changed as it has been since the days of its glory. The capitals of the ancient world inspire us, at the sight of their decaying monuments, with thoughts that lead us far back into the history of our race with feelings that enlarge the sphere of our sympathies by uniting our recollections of the past with the substantial forms of things present. But there is a power in the human mind by which it is made capable of renewing scenes as vividly without external aids as when they are most abundant. There are no marble records on the plain of Marathon to aid the enthusiasm of the traveler, but he feels no want of them. Thus it is, whenever any strong and definite feeling of our moral nature is concerned, that we need but be present on the spot where great events occurred, and if they were intimately connected with the fate of multitudes, or with the history of our religion, we shall experience a sentiment of veneration and interest amounting to awe, and one above all comparison nobler than that which is excited chiefly by the

pomp or wonders of antiquity. It is for this reason that Jerusalem, notwithstanding the ploughshare of the heathen, infinitely exceeds in interest such places as Rome, Athens, and even the cities of Egypt, which still abound in monuments of their former grandeur. No place has ever suffered like Jerusalem. It is more than probable that not a single relic exists of the city that was the joy of the whole earth. The most careful and enthusiastic of travelers confess that when they have endeavored to find particular marks for their footsteps, there has been little to encourage them in the investigation. But Jerusalem depends not for its power of inspiring veneration for the remains of temples and palaces; and even if there were less chance of speculating with success respecting the sites of its ancient edifices, it would still be the city towards which every religious and meditative mind would turn with the deepest longing. It is with Jerusalem as it would be with the home of our youth were it leveled with the earth and we returned to the spot after many years and found there a ploughed field or a deserted waste. The same thoughts would arise in our hearts as if the building were still before us. In fact, the site would probably be rendered still more impressive from the very circumstance that the ruin which had taken place was complete.

It is difficult to describe the feelings of a

\* This excerpt is taken from Sir Moses Montefiore: A Centennial Biography, by Lucien Wolf (New York, 1885). It is a small fragment from the travel diaries of Judith, Lady Montefiore, who accompanied her husband, the famous philanthropist, on his first journey to the Holy Land in 1827.

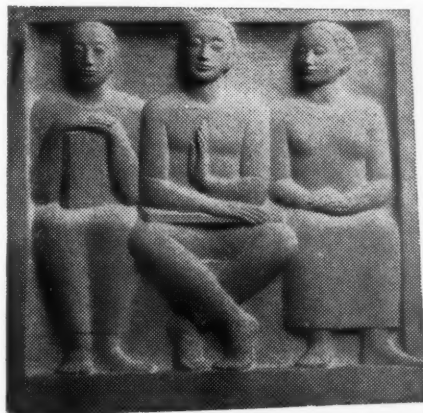


traveler when he is among the mountains on which the awful power of the Almighty once visibly rested, and when he approaches the city where He placed His name; whence His law was to go forth to all the world; and where the beauty of holiness shone in its morning splendor. Upon such a scene, even in its sorrow and captivity, even in its desolation, the Gentiles, the people of all nations of the earth, as well as its own children, look with profound awe and admiration. Oh! what the feelings of the traveler are when on such a spot and when imagining that he hears the enraptured tones of Israel's own inspired King none can conceive but those who have had the privilege and the felicity of experiencing them. As we drew nearer to Jerusalem the aspect of the surrounding country became more and more sterile and gloomy. The land was covered with thorns and briars, and sadly did the words of the Psalmist enter our minds: "He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the water-springs into dry ground; a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein!" (Ps. cvii, 33, 34).

But solemn as were the feelings excited by the melancholy desolateness of the rocky hills and valleys through which we were passing, they were suddenly lost in a sense of rapture and indescribable joy, for now the Holy City itself rose full into view, with all its cupolas and minarets reflecting the splendor of the heavens. Dismounting from our horses, we sat down and poured forth the sentiments which so strongly animated our hearts in devout praises to Him whose mercy and providence alone had thus brought us, in health and safety, to the city of our fathers. Pursuing our path, we soon passed the tomb of Nabi Shemuel (the Prophet Samuel), and at about five o'clock reached the gates of the Holy City. Khassan having dismounted, his mule instantly ran off, and notwithstanding the efforts of his master, of Ibrahim, Armstrong, and Bekhor, he kept them in chase 'til he stopped on the Mount of Olives. There Dr. Loewe proposed that we should encamp; but Monte-

flore, being greatly fatigued, considered that it would be better to select a less elevated situation. We accordingly proceeded to the valley selected by the mukkarries and soon discovered that we had committed a serious error in choosing a spot from which the air was excluded, and which the contagious atmosphere of the town was so much more likely to infect. We, therefore, ascended a steep path which was cut out of the mountain almost like a flight of stairs, but which our horses scaled with their customary ease and safety. The pure air of the Mount of Olives surrounded us with the most refreshing fragrance; and as we directed our attention to the view around us, Jerusalem appeared in its entire extent at our feet, the Valley of Jehoshaphat to our left, and in the distance the dark misty waves of the Dead Sea.

Yesterday we went to inspect the western wall of the Temple of Solomon. How wonderful that it should have so long defied the ravages of time! The huge stones seemed to cling together—to be cemented by a power mightier than decay, so that they might be a memorial of Israel's past glory. And may they be regarded as a sign of future greatness when Israel shall be redeemed and the whole world shall, with one accord, sing praises to Israel's God.



Education

CESARE STEA

# *Life in Rural India*

By BRADFORD LYTTLE

THIS IS A DESCRIPTION of aspects of rural life in the subcontinent of India. I became acquainted with Indian hamlets, villages, and towns in 1957 while traveling in that country for the purpose of studying the movement for social development founded by Mahatma Gandhi. The majority of the communities I visited were in central India, near Nagpur, about 500 miles west of Bombay, but the way of life that I will describe is prevalent throughout rural India from Kashmir to Kerala.

First, the social structure of rural India is ancient. Archaeological remains of villages which existed in 3500 B.C. have been uncovered in the subcontinent. There is evidence that many social conditions, even the implements and machines that are used in villages today, have not changed for thousands of years. This is stagnation, but in a sense it is durability, too. The Indian town, when its naturally self-sufficient economy has not been destroyed, has shown itself capable of weathering revolutions, conquests, and other social disasters.

Another source of interest is the fact that the villages are the foundation of the culture of the world's largest democracy. Gandhi knew this, identified himself with the life and aspirations of the peasants, and drew much of his vast political prestige from the adoration which hundreds of millions of illiterate, semi-starved people gave him. India's future, therefore, depends on what happens in her rural communities; and no comprehension of India, or all Asia, for that matter, can be realistic without one's taking into account the way of life found in the hundreds of thousands of villages in which most Indians live.

Finally, in many ways, the physical poverty of these communities is a nadir to which organized society can sink. It is in-

structive to try to understand some of the causes and effects of this poverty.

Villages in India vary in size from fifty people to several thousand. In the smaller hamlets, a visitor may soon become aware that most of the inhabitants are members of two or three families. The family is a stronger social unit in Asia than in the West. Members of the same family tend to remain in the neighborhood of their birth and have important rights and obligations with respect to their family. If a man is prosperous, he is obliged to support even distant relatives who are not so fortunate as he, but if his condition becomes worse, his relatives must care for him. Thus, the majority are assured of the necessities of life—a matter very important in a land where starvation is a frequent cause of death. But the security offered by the family has the fault of discouraging the enterprise and mobility which are needed to raise the material standards of life.

Villages may be found beside streams and rivers, on open plains, or nestling on the tops of hills and other elevations. It is a great advantage for a community to be near a source of water, such as a river, that does not evaporate in the dry season.

I could detect no comprehensive planning governing the growth of the villages I visited. Similar to small communities the world over, most Indian villages have a main street, usually one of the arterial roads leading into it, which has become a shopping center. From this main road, streets and paths lead off at all angles. None of the streets, even if named, is marked. Paving is almost unknown, although occasionally the open sewers have tiled sections. In the rainy season, the streets traveled by heavy carts become quagmires. In the dry season, the brassy sun and the hot wind dry the streets,

and feet and carts pulverize them so that breezes will whip miniature tornadoes of dirt and refuse past the houses and shops.

Buildings are constructed of mud, wood, or brick. Wood is scarce on the Indian plains and is used sparingly in building construction for rafters, posts, and window-frames. Bamboo is a very important construction material if it is conveniently available. Wooden or bamboo pieces of a building customarily are lashed or pegged together. Nails are scarce.

In all villages, most of the structures are mud huts with thatched or tile roofs. Many huts are as small as seven feet square. The huts may have front yards that are inclosed by mud walls. Most of the poorer dwellings have no door, but only an entrance opening in one wall. Another opening in the side of the hut is the window. Chimneys are not built into the huts. In good weather when cooking is done in the front yard, lack of a chimney causes no discomfort; but when a fire must be kindled inside the hut its smoke can escape only through doors and windows and under the eaves. Fortunately, the wood and dried cow-patties, which serve as fuel, smoke very little.

Tiles and bricks used in building construction are made by villagers from clay or from the crude dirt and soil of the fields when clay is unavailable. The material is mined, softened with water, mixed with a suitable amount of straw, molded in wooden forms, and then dried in the sun. After the patties have dried, they are stacked together in alternate layers with kindling and then burned. Stacks of burned tile and brick are prominent features in the fields near every village.

Indian peasant women plaster the insides of their houses with cow dung. The dung is diluted until it has the consistency of soup and the women then smear it on the walls and floors of their huts with their hands. When it has dried, the plaster is odorless and offers a smooth, cool, brownish-gray surface that is surprisingly durable and forms very pleasing contours around structural

projections. For centuries in India, the preparation of specialized varieties of cow-dung plaster has been a refined technique. The world-famous frescoes adorning the walls and ceilings of Buddhist cave temples at Ajanta, India, are painted on a cow dung plaster.

Flat boards are used to construct the sides, floors, and doors of wooden buildings. Rarely is lumber cut and finished by modern sawmills powered by electricity or steam. Most lumber in India is cut laboriously by hand. Logs are supported on a trestle or triangular prop while two men—one squatting above, the other stooped below—draw a bucksaw up and down.

The finest homes in a village may be constructed of brick. Mud mortar is used. Many large homes have a square open yard in their center where the family's meals are prepared and eaten and other domestic activities, such as spinning, weaving and carpentry work, go on.

Furnishings for the poorer huts are simple and rude. Beds, if any, will have frames handmade from stout sticks. Tightly stretched hemp nets serve as springs. Bedbugs thrive in the cracks and crevices of these beds. Very likely there will be no beds and the entire family will sleep on pallets spread on the floor. Huts do not have stoves that we would recognize as such. Cooking is done on open hearths built of clay. Three humps on a hearth's upper surface solidly balance any pot or pan that may be placed on it. Wood and cow dung are fuels burned in these hearths.

It is interesting to watch a peasant woman toast "chappatis," unleavened wheat cakes about the shape and size of a pancake. A bed of coals is built up in the hearth, then raked to one side. Quickly, a chappati is stood on edge and leaned against the hearth's side opposite the coals. The chappati browns and blisters almost immediately. It is then dextrously flipped over by the woman and its other side is toasted. In a few seconds, it is ready to eat. A dozen chappatis can be prepared in a few minutes

in this way. The women pop them in and out of the hearth and flip them over somehow without burning their fingers.

Kitchen utensils in the poorer huts are crudely fashioned from iron and brass. A wrought-iron frying bowl about a foot wide and two inches deep may be found. Clay jugs of many shapes and sizes are used as storage containers. There may be a set of hand-forged iron tongs equipped with jaws at one end to grip pans, and with semi-circular arms at the other to lift jars. A kitchen knife is a strange contraption. Its sickle-like blade is supported by a base so that a squatting person can hold it securely to the floor with one foot. Food is cut by pushing it with both hands against the knife's stationary blade. Brass utensils are used throughout India. Most brassware is coated on the inside with tin so that it will resist the corrosive acids in fruits and milk. This tin coating must be renewed periodically by the local blacksmith. Some craftsmen specialize in plating brassware and ply their trade from house to house.

The simplest kinds of oil lamps illuminate the huts. One variety is equipped with a tin bracket for mounting on a wall. The lamp stands about six inches high, has a glass kerosene reservoir, a mechanism for adjusting a circular wick, and a glass chimney. It has no shade. This kind of lamp can be purchased for the equivalent of six cents in the village market.

Shops and stores are located along the main street of a town. There may be a shed which provides shade for a common market. Under the shed, peasant women will display piles of grain, vegetables, fruits, and condiments. The fruits and vegetables which I saw for sale in village markets were shriveled and dirty. Piles of rice and wheat were gray. All grains are sold by weight and usually are so adulterated with dirt and gravel that every kernel must be separated and cleaned before the grain can be eaten.

Shops are small—some mere cubbyholes. There are, of course, no drugstores, supermarkets, or filling stations. One shop will specialize in dry-goods—rolls of cotton mate-

rials and a variety of sandals will be displayed. Next to the dry-goods store may be the tailor, who, for a few pennies, will cut and sew the cloth into a sari or dhoti. There will be a blacksmith's shop with an anvil and a giant bellows for its clay and brick hearth and a tin shop where small hardware is manufactured. A bicycle repair-center may have been set up, too.

Many of the enterprises are pathetic and shockingly express the material poverty of the people. Tin cans, even rusty ones, are not thrown away, but are collected to constitute the inventory of a merchant. His store is several square yards of dusty ground. Beside him there may be another man who sells used bottles and glasses. Women will squat in the market all day to sell one bunch of bananas. In every village, two or three boy-cobblers can be found whose implements and materials are a hammer, a worn knife, some bent nails, and a pile of torn and scuffed leather. Everywhere in the market there are swarms of flies. Cows shamble through the busy place, and emaciated dogs, attracted by the odor of the food, slink about.

Even today, thousands of villages in India have no schools. Before India became independent, over 95% of the population were illiterate. Intense, large-scale education programs have reduced this illiteracy rate significantly, but progress has been greatest in those communities which are most accessible—the cities. Education of the peasants is chiefly hampered by the difficulty in finding young Indians who are qualified to teach and who will live in the villages. As in all under-developed nations, education in India is attractive partly because it offers an escape from the primitive, stagnant, and poverty-stricken way of life characteristic of the villages. Few educated young people wish to return to communities where living conditions are harsh and humiliating. Village teaching facilities generally are very crude. The one-room mud and wooden school buildings I saw were equipped with neither desks nor blackboards.



Religion, perhaps, is the most important preoccupation of most villagers, yet to me there were few obvious symbols of this importance. Squat temples, ten to fifteen feet high, are located in small compounds near the outskirts of many villages. Smaller temples and shrines may be found in the shop districts or scattered among the huts. Wooden and brass images of Hindu gods are sold in stores.

In the course of its long history, the subcontinent has been invaded and infiltrated by many races of people. The aboriginal inhabitants were called "Adivasis," and today the Government Department, devoted to promoting the interests of the aboriginal tribes that remain, is responsible for a nation within a nation of twenty million people. The Adivasis were overcome by "Aryans" who came from the northwest and today are the predominant racial strain in India. The Aryan invasions flooded North India, but sometimes did not reach the south; consequently, South Indians have more prominent Adivasi features than their countrymen; they are shorter and darker. Those Indians who live in the Punjab near Delhi are renowned for their height and strength. Indian children are exquisite, with delicately shaped face bones, glowing brown skin, and shiny black hair and eyes. They age rapidly; so that a peasant may be bent and wrinkled at forty. The hot climate, disease, heavy labor, and malnutrition are tireless, grim enemies.

No language is yet common to all the villages of India. Officially, Hindustani or "Hindi," a derivative of ancient Sanskrit, is the national tongue, and it is taught in village schools when teachers are available who understand it. English is spoken by all educated people. The villagers usually are illiterate in all languages, and the unifying effect of spoken Hindi is still too small to be significant. Thirteen major languages are spoken in India and 256 dialects. In South India alone, there are five major tongues. Some of the states of India have frontiers determined by linguistic differences, and

political conflicts which arise over the creation of these boundaries can result in terrible riots.

Village clothing is simple. Infants and children are naked. The men wear dhotis, a sort of draped loincloth, and the women saris. Men's clothing is predominantly white, but saris can be brilliantly colored. Jewelry is worn by the women, too. Peasants customarily convert what cash they may have into jewelry, which is worn by the women. Villagers go barefoot or wear sandals made from the hides of animals that have died naturally.

The community laundry is a nearby river or pond. Washing machines are flat stones and the strong, brown arms of peasants. Homemade soap and sabonaceous roots are used. Dirt is loosened by lashing the washing against flat stones. Rinsing follows and the laundry is laid out to dry on other stones or the grass of the river bank. In those villages where colored clothes is worn, the stretch of river where the laundry is can be recognized by its festoons of white, red, and yellow cloth.

I am not able to give more than a few facts about local government in rural India. Smaller hamlets are traditionally governed by an informal council composed of five of the wisest and most trusted peasants. This council is named the "Panchyat." "Panch" means "five" in Hindustani.

The social structure of all Indian communities is exceedingly complicated and deserves the kind of description that only a trained anthropologist can give it. Status differences between villagers are created by religion, caste, language, and race. Perhaps the most unusual distinctions are those of caste. In a hamlet as many as twenty-five different castes may be recognized. Each caste is associated with a separate profession, trade, or occupation. Teachers, blacksmiths, farmers, barbers, and other tradesmen will have their own castes, and it is forbidden for the member of one caste to do the work associated with another. Such customs guarantee division of labor and hence create jobs



in a nation where it is important to employ labor, not to save it. But the caste customs also inhibit technical progress. "Handy" people, intellectuals who are also at home with tools and machinery, are nearly nonexistent. If a machine, such as a pump, breaks, it may never be repaired because there is no peasant who is a member of a caste that repairs machines. This is one example of the way in which custom and tradition can inhibit the improvement of village life. Other examples abound.

Violent crime is very rare in rural India. I have heard that a woman can travel anywhere in India without fear of being molested.

Sewage and garbage disposal are the responsibility of the Indian lower castes and outcastes. Even large towns do not have closed sewers. Most refuse is thrown into the gutters where it lies until collected by street sweepers. There are no covered latrines of flush toilets except in the few communities where government workers, members of the Gandhian movement, or private development agencies have promoted them. Human excreta, therefore, remain uncovered throughout the day and until collected at night. It is customary for many peasants to use the fields surrounding their village for latrines. This is done for convenience' sake, not from a desire to fertilize the soil. While the Japanese preserve and use as fertilizer as much human excreta as they can, this waste product in India is abhorred as unclean and thrown away. It has been estimated that hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of fertilizer is lost each year in this way. Village development programs of all kinds teach the use of human and animal excreta for fertilizer, and continuous, large-scale experimental programs are underway for the development of efficient composting techniques. The lack of sanitary sewage and garbage disposal in the villages helps produce very serious disease problems. Swarms of flies quickly carry infections to the places where they can do the most harm.

Except in those communities where the

Government or missionaries have established clinics, modern medicine and doctors are unknown to rural India. Superstition and nature cures do not raise an effective barrier against contamination of food and water supplies and malnutrition. Midwives assist at childbirth, but can help little if serious complications ensue. The idea of preventive, precautionary medicine is novel and slow to establish itself. Because of constant infection and lack of sound medical advice or care, most villagers are chronically ill with malaria, some variety of amoebic dysentery, tuberculosis, leprosy, a skin or deficiency disease, or other of the countless debilitating ailments that are found in tropical countries. Education of the peasantry in hygiene and the provision of doctors and clinics are important objectives for all of the agencies working in rural India. The needs in this field are enormous, however, and resources slim. The virulent infections and absence of adequate medical treatment in rural India give every American or European a good chance of becoming seriously ill if he tries to live in a village without taking special and exact precautions. Several of my American and European friends and acquaintances took no special precautions while traveling in India. They believed they would suffer brief illnesses and then become immune to further attacks. Four were forced to leave the country before they had planned; two had amoebic dysentery; the third, jaundice; and the fourth, malaria.

I believe that an American traveling in India and thinking of living in the villages should not forget that the millions of Indians he sees about him are the survivors of a struggle against disease so fierce that 60% of the children born in Indian villages die in the first year of their lives, and the average life span is only thirty-two years. Those who live have been painfully tested by infections that have never touched Americans and Europeans. The effect of these infections on non-Indians can be disastrous.

Rural economy is, of course, agricultural. In the North of India, wheat is the principle

crop. In South India, rice takes the place of wheat. Indians, therefore, are divided colloquially into "wheat eaters" and "rice eaters," depending on which grain is the staple in their diet.

Other grains are grown as well—a great deal of sugar-cane, some vegetables, and cotton. Fruits, particularly bananas and papayas, abound on the uplands and foothills of mountain ranges. My impression was that a far greater variety of crops is cultivated in America than in India. An Indian meal derives its different tastes from the various kinds of spices and curries that are used to season two or three grains and vegetables, rather than from the variety of foods served.

Villages support many industries subsidiary to their agriculture. Sugar-cane mills, mills that extract oil from peanuts and the seeds of indigenous trees, such as the "neem" tree, are found in most communities. Soap-making, leather-making, wood-working, and brass-working industries are widespread. Spinning and weaving, once two of the largest village industries, were nearly wiped out by the introduction, during British rule, of inexpensive, machine-made cloth. Today, these skills and enterprises are being revived by the Government and by the Gandhian "khadi" or homespun movement.

Indian villages are potentially self-sufficient, independent economic units. Where industrialization has attached their economies to the world market, the villages have suffered and prospered as the world demand for their raw materials has fluctuated. When the communities were self-sufficient economic units, standards of life were held low, but they enjoyed a high degree of political freedom bordering on complete autonomy when the central government of India was weak. This fact of the political autonomy claimed by a self-sufficient village has been developed into a national political philosophy by the Gandhians. One of the ideals of Vinoba Bhave, founder of the famous "Bhoodan" or "Land Gift" movement, is a nation composed of entirely independent, cooperative and cooperating villages. Such a

nation would not need a large central government; and while it would lack the armed power which carries with it international political prestige, the nation would be free from both dependence on an unpredictable world economy and the temptation to bully other nations to achieve access to their markets and raw materials.

Since over 90% of India's population live in the villages, the programs of the Government and other agencies, such as the Gandhian movement, to encourage village industries and improve agriculture will have the effect of strengthening the basic social structure of the nation. For thousands of years the villages, the cells of this structure, have shown a durability that survives revolution and invasions. India will be strong, therefore, if her villages once again develop sound economies. Rural development may be more important than political changes in the sub-continent and may eventually determine both domestic and international Indian politics.

Less than five percent of rural India has been electrified. Those communities without electricity have simple, primitive sources of power. Human muscle is the most important power source, and human beings may be seen operating irrigation machines, grinding wheat, dragging plows and cultivators, and carrying enormous loads—tasks that we customarily expect animals or machines to do. Of the animals, the massive, slow and docile bullock is the prime source of power. He is hitched to carts, plows, irrigation machines, presses, and mills. I saw horses pulling light passenger carts but never heavy wagons. Camels share the bullock's tasks in North India.

Steam is not a power source in the villages since the fuel supply to fire boilers for steam engines is inadequate. Gasoline and diesel engines are not found because their fuels are too expensive. Wind on the Indian plains is too light and unpredictable most of the year to be harnessed by mills. Improving the power sources available in the villages is one of the first tasks to which the

Indian Government has addressed itself, for the material development of any culture requires abundant, inexpensive, and flexible sources of power. But modern forms of power are extremely difficult to install permanently in rural India. Even if adequate power is available, the productivity of the soil and of rural industries remains so low that the power used for exploitation exceeds the returns on the produce. In addition, the machines required to produce and control power are too complicated to be repaired by local blacksmiths and mechanics. A machine can remain unused in a village because an essential element has been broken and no one knows how to repair it.

Conventional rural electrification appears the most satisfactory way to bring in new power. Electricity is used to power village industries and light the stores and shops. It rarely finds domestic use.

I saw three kinds of water supplies for Indian villages. Rivers that do not dry up during the severest drought are reliable sources of water. Unfortunately, the rivers become contaminated by animals and people bathing in them. Throughout the central plains of India the water table lies a short distance below the land's surface and wells offer access to abundant water. But the wells are not sunk with care to insure that they are isolated from sources of underground contamination and are open so that dirt and refuse can easily fall into the water. Many wells in South India are outstanding because of their shape and depth. They are terraced and taper from a mouth of one hundred feet square to a four-foot square shaft which plunges to two or three hundred feet. The sub-soil in India does not permit wells to be drilled effectively; therefore, even wells of this depth are customarily sunk by hand. Reservoirs, or "tanks," as the Indians call them, are ponds, sometimes artificial, that may be several acres in area. These tanks fill in the rainy season and the water gradually evaporates and is depleted throughout the dry season until all that is left is a stagnant, slimy puddle. Cattle are watered

in the tanks and the peasants launder in them. This means that tank water is unsafe for human consumption.

Very intense programs are being pressed throughout rural India to improve the drinking-water sources, particularly the wells. Where electricity is available, the wells are covered and electric pumps installed. A Quaker social and technical assistance project at Barpali, Orissa, has pioneered covered wells equipped with cast-iron hand-pumps. These and other kinds of sanitary water sources are being adopted slowly by the villages. Progress in improving water sources is hampered, however, by the circumstance that even simple pumps must be nearly fool-proof, for if they break in a village it is likely that no one can or will repair them and the community will revert to its ancient, polluted water sources.

Irrigation is an ancient science in India and is widely used. Communities along the coast of Southeast India are surrounded by irrigated rice paddies. Networks of irrigation ditches traverse the sugar-cane fields near the villages of the northern part of India, near Delhi. Irrigation machines are often picturesque. Some are operated by bullocks or camels, others by manpower. The designs of some of these machines may not have changed for thousands of years. Whether or not irrigation will be used does not always depend on the availability of water. Even in the hot season, an abundance of water is to be found thirty to fifty feet below the eroded plains of Central India, but it is uneconomical to raise it to irrigate the parched fields. This situation is a shocking example of the economic poverty of that part of the subcontinent and of the damage which has been wrought on once fertile lands by centuries of erosion and unscientific farming.

Transportation in the villages is slow but certain. Indian peasants are strong walkers. They ride bicycles well, too, over open fields and along dirt roads. Women and men may carry enormous loads on their heads. Heavy hauling is the task of a bullock and his cart.

The pneumatic tires with which a few bullock carts are equipped may represent the first major improvement in these vehicles for fifteen hundred years.

The species of animals that may be seen in a village reflect the religion of the peasants living there. I visited predominantly Hindu villages. The inhabitants were vegetarians and therefore kept no livestock for meat. I do not remember seeing even a chicken, for most Hindus class eggs with meat in their dietary restrictions. Cows and bullocks are part of the life of every village—the former, because they yield milk and provide bullocks; the latter, because they are the primary source of power. Goats are kept, too, for their milk.

Dogs are numerous, but are seldom kept as pets. The dogs I saw were semi-wild and emaciated, obviously starving. The natives expressed their dislike for the dogs by throwing sticks and rocks at them. I was told that dogs are hated because they compete with human beings for the meagre food supply. Dogs are not killed by the Hindus. Like cows and all other animals, they are believed to have souls and therefore must be permitted to live. Moslems are not vegetarians and I suspect that animals of many kinds would be found in Moslem villages.

The wild animals native to India are part of the culture of every village. Hinduism is rich in animalistic lore and symbolism. When we read this lore in the West it may seem strange to us, but it is natural to rural India. Monkeys abound and dozens can be seen in the fields and playing around train stations. Camels and elephants still are used for transportation and power in some parts of India. Exotic species of birds, such as peacocks and parrots, are as familiar to Indian peasants as hawks and sparrows are to us. Several times I was warned not to sleep away from buildings in a village because a tiger or some other large cat might carry me off in the night. These stories seemed improbable until, while traveling in a bus not three miles from a town, we had

the luck to surprise five tigers and leopards drinking in a nearby riverbed. The great beasts were loath to leave the water, and they glided into the underbrush only after the bus had stopped and the passengers had climbed out and yelled for some minutes. When the townspeople were told of our encounter, they were neither surprised nor perturbed.

The motif of this sketch of Indian village life is poverty. It is a profound poverty hovering just above starvation. An Indian might accuse me of despising his country and his compatriots for this poverty. This is not the case. I recognize that the pathetic, material condition of the majority of the Indian people has been brought upon them by historical circumstances over which they had no control. And I have been inspired by the realism, energy, spirit of sacrifice and fortitude with which Indians of all conditions and classes are striving to improve the way of life in their country.

Their task is appalling. Almost every part of village life is an obstacle to raising the standard of living. The villagers are harassed by disease, shackled by illiteracy, blinded by superstition, and enervated by religious beliefs which are other-worldly, and they regard material existence itself as an illusion. Where villagers want to improve their condition, they find themselves without capital for such improvement and are deeply in debt to money lenders. The soil which they must cultivate often has eroded until it is little different from gravel, and their tools are primitive and inefficient. Their poverty, therefore, is brought on by a combination of unfavorable conditions which interlock in such a way that progress, rather than bitter frustration, is their reward only if all conditions are improved simultaneously.

If India is today poor in material things, she is rich in spirit, in imagination, and in hope. The poverty of India's villages may stimulate her people to reclaim the cultural majesty for which this subcontinent once was legendary.

# THE BROKEN WALL\*

A SEA LEGEND — By GRIGORI GERSHUNI

Translated from the Russian by Benjamin Weintraub

As eagles at liberty, sea waves were free.  
Mother Storm lulled them gaily, and  
Happily they rolled on in their shoreless path.  
But the grave and wicked tyrant Man,  
Envyng the lot of the waves,  
Deprive them of freedom, resolved  
That they roll not free by the violent gulfs,  
Changing smiles with sunlight and beautiful skies.

He sent forth his obedient slaves:  
Begotten were rocks from the womb of the earth,  
Into the deep of the sea they were thrown.  
As the stones to the bottom were falling,  
Gaily the waves looked on.  
Bouncing, leaping, tossing about  
At their work, and at rest, they caressed the rocks.  
In boundless space they abounded in freedom.

"From the womb of the earth stern guests have arrived  
To join us in praising the freedom of life;  
With warm greetings we'll meet them,"  
Whispered the youthful and glittering waves.  
Only Mother Storm and Hurricane Father whirled unfriendly  
As they escorted the guests,  
Somberly watching the work going on.

And the rocks were falling to the bottom of the sea,  
Tightly pressing each other, already resembling  
The shape of a wall, constraining the waves,  
Blocking their race, obstructing their way.  
The waves gazed bewildered as their track was restricted.  
Stumbling at the rocks, with a groan,  
They rolled aside, and the sea trembled.  
The wall was huge, immovable, mighty.  
Struck with terror, the waves drove round,  
Rushing abreast at the merciless rocks.

\* Grigori Gershuni was born of Jewish parents in Minsk, Russia, in 1870. By profession a pharmacist, he early engaged in underground political activity at Minsk, and at the end of 1890 served a short prison term. In 1900 he became one of the founders of the so-called "Fighting Organization of the Party of Socialist Revolutionists." He was arrested in Kiev in 1903 and was sentenced to death. The death sentence was later commuted to a life term of penal

servitude. In 1906 he was transferred from the fortress of Schlussemburg in St. Petersburg to a penitentiary in Eastern Siberia from which he made a daring escape via America to Europe. He was the author of a book of reminiscences entitled *Iz Nedavnevo Proshlovo (From the Recent Past)* which was published in 1907 and recently republished in Moscow in abbreviated form. Gershuni died in Paris in 1907.



Uproar and groans hung over the sea;  
Horror-stricken, the waves tossed about. "Betrayed! Betrayed!"  
They cried. "As friends we met them.  
The freedom of old is stolen from us."

Mother Storm was weeping. Father Hurricane, raging,  
Flew to the wall.  
"O stones so mighty, so able,  
You, too, at times have longed for freedom;  
You, too, at times were free, unconstrained.  
Why did you rob my offspring of their freedom?"  
Groaning, the powerful rocks gave answer:  
"We here have no voice, have no will;  
We steal if commanded to steal."  
Mother Storm and Hurricane Father, roaring, weeping,  
Summoned the waves to tell the terrible news:  
"Poor waves, my beloved, my children, your freedom is lost,  
Your freedom is gone; hence but to slaves you are equal."  
And hurried away.

The old, mighty waves descended below,  
Where storms could not wake them, nor hurricanes call them.  
While those much younger were gloomily rolling;  
Nothing of singing or laughter was heard.  
Then the youthful waves, weary of prison,  
Together did dash at the foe.  
United as chains, they hit the jagged stones.  
Immovable rocks would not quiver.  
The echo rebounded in groaning,  
The groaning of the shattered breasts of the warriors.

Years passed, and many waves, still young,  
Had crushed their bosoms on the threatening rocks.  
The sea wept. Still grave, still somber, was the barrier.  
The waves, bewildered: "Let us wait, and gather strength."  
Yet more years passed; the waves grew stronger.  
Envoys they sent throughout the ocean  
To waken the sleeping waves to battle.

Down in the deep the old waves assembled,  
Grizzled old waves, gloomily nodding  
"We have neither the passion, nor powerful sway.  
No, we dare not oppose the rocks."  
The envoys hastened to seek Mother Storm;  
They explored the sea for Hurricane Father.  
Near to the mountain valleys they found them:  
"Greetings and love from the waves. Come,  
Leave the narrow mountains. Turn your flight to the ocean.  
Tear off the disgraceful chains  
With which our comrades at home are confined.  
Inspire the ancient waves with ardent desire.

With hunger for freedom, assembled as warriors,  
Then we will charge together at the rocks.  
We will not fear the struggle: we scorn death.  
We want but freedom for our brothers' sake."

The eyes of Hurricane Father flashed fire.  
Mother Storm's heart trembled and heeded.  
The envoys' plea reminded of olden days.  
They received the greeting with ardor and friendship.  
Then, from mountain valleys to shoreless ocean,  
The nearing of violent war was heard:  
"We march! We come! Freedom to save, freedom to brave.  
Rise, vigorous waves, shatter the chains, demolish obstructions."  
The vehement appeal awoke the sleeping,  
Converted the old to youth, inspired boldness,  
And the waves rushed and rolled  
In answer to the battle call.

Misty night hung over the sea.  
Black clouds appeared at the violent call.  
From east to west, from north to south,  
Came the waves, massed in battalions.  
Youthful waves, full of boldness,  
Aquiver to be the first in battle.  
Lightning flashed over all, like Storm,  
Racking, pulling, raving, full of uproar and mist.

Hurricane Father hurried to succor and aid;  
Multitudes rose with a challenging cry:  
"Conquest or death! Forward, vigorous waves!"  
They rolled against the somber wall  
The rocks in anguish shuddered.  
Faster, still faster, breast-forward they hurled themselves  
Upon the rocks—and lifeless were thrown back.  
The wall stood hoary with white blood of foam.  
Above the moans of the fearless combatants  
The Storm rumbled: "Offspring, beloved, my children,  
Still more will languish and will fall,  
Unless the foe today we conquer."

The sea raged on more boisterous.  
More waves came forth to aid the fallen.  
With what vigor they breached, what might they commanded!  
Roaring, they smashed the jagged rocks;  
Dying, they called their brothers to the cause.  
The sea had deserted the shores;  
All the ocean joined in the powerful conflict.  
Old waves came up to the aid of the young  
Who with terrible strength were attacking the stones.  
On an earthquake of passion the sun arose—  
A somber and wearying dawn.

Still the rocks stood unmoved;  
Still the enemy stormed o'er the waves;  
The waves abated, then died.  
The people gazed sadly as the waves disappeared in flight.  
Hearts overcome with sorrow, people cried  
For Him to crown the waves with victory.

Even the wicked tyrant Man was shocked,  
He who imposed the rocks on the sea.  
Joyfully now he would remove the rocks  
And restore their freedom to waves.  
His hardened soul trembled at sight  
Of the torment and death of the sea.

Too late. The waves were not pleading,  
The waves were not crying.  
Too much of freedom had gone,  
Too sweet the revenge of the fallen  
Led by the cries of the maddened Storm,  
They whirled at the glittering rocks with solemn vigor.  
Either the rocks would be conquered  
Or the sea would become a grave.  
United, they crashed on the wall.  
The rocks shook at the violent blow.

Lifeless, the waves swung away;  
Vehement and frenzied, they clinched again.  
Chaos hung over the sea,  
And the sea, so it seemed, had arisen  
From its depths, with the skies hugged close.  
And the rocks crumbled down.  
With the final blow, they moved  
And fell into the pit, the sea,  
Where the conquered waves reposed.  
"Away, disgraceful ones," cried the sea,  
"Here, the bravest waves are at rest."  
And revealed its deep abyss;  
And there, cursing, the rocks disappeared:  
"Glory to the waves; to us, disgrace everlasting."

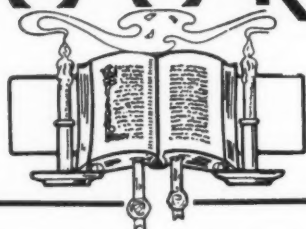
The shoreless sea was full of delight;  
It had conquered the violent might of the foe.

And the waves ramble freely and honor the warriors  
Who felt that their brothers might live in freedom.

Glory to the perished!

Freedom for the living!

# BOOKS



Books reviewed in this issue may be purchased at the regular price through the Book Service Department of THE CHICAGO JEWISH FORUM, 179 West Washington St., Chicago 2, Ill.

***Minister of Death: the Adolf Eichmann Story***, by Quentin Reynolds, Ephraim Katz, and Zory Aldonby. The Viking Press. 246 pp. \$5.00.

This is the story of an unspeakable villain, bred by a vicious, murder-bent regime, and a recital of deeds the like of which civilization or man in his darkest ages has never known or experienced before. So meticulous and factual is the authors' narrative of Eichmann-inflicted horrors that, it seems to me, the book could serve adequately as an official indictment in the forthcoming trial of this criminal in an Israel court.

It is, of course, hardly possible to read through a book of this nature at one sitting. The reader must pause, if briefly, to assimilate the constantly mounting material that testifies to the incredible depravity of one whose sole object in life was killing defenseless people, Jews, on a scale and in numbers unknown in the annals of humanity. He was a minister of death by choice, order, and irrepressible inclination.

An impecunious lad of a lower middle-class Austrian family with barely a high school education and no aptitude for any profession or trade, he joined the Nazi party when in his early twenties. A lackey at heart, he curried the favor of his immediate superiors and, with Hitler's ascent to power, was given a post with storm troopers and later with the Gestapo. He distinguished himself early as a ruthless scourge of the Jews. At the beginning of World War II his executive abilities and dispatch in handling bloody assignments dealing with the fleecing of Jews of their liberty and property, first in Austria, and later in Hungary, prompted the Nazi high command to grant him constantly wider powers. The earlier method of the Germans of simply confiscat-

ing the property of the Jews and then permitting them to emigrate elsewhere was abandoned. Hitler, Himmler, Goebbels, and Goering, in secret meetings, determined upon a "final solution" of the Jewish problem—organized murder: killing them with gun and gas, in their homes, on the streets—anywhere. Such an approach to the "final solution" proved inadequate. More speedy measures were needed. As the Nazi juggernaut was rolling over Europe it found Jews everywhere—in Poland, Rumania, France, Holland, Yugoslavia, and elsewhere—a defenseless people it wanted to destroy. Millions of them! The task of killing them called for organization, imagination, and the brains and initiative of a man whose proved aptitude was in the realm of calculated murder. Adolf Eichmann was given the power and the means to do the job. He did it.

It was he who founded the murder factories in Germany, Austria, Poland, and France. It was Eichmann who chose the type of gas capsules that stilled the lives of millions before the corpses were thrown into the ovens. He was impatient with the slowness of the processes that spelled death to hundreds of thousands, and he read daily, greedily, in his offices the totals on book-keeping tickers' reports of the slaughter. He visited personally the crematoriums and led parties of upper echelon Nazis to witness the burning of men, women, and children. The authors cite no single instance of mercy that he showed to any Jew or prisoners of war. He was ever impatient at the quota of victims. His subordinates roamed over Europe to seek in countries conquered by the Germans for more human fodder for his factories. He dreamed that in the event of Hitler's victory he would be the commissar who would finish the job of killing all remaining Jews in the universe.

Hitler lost. Came the Nuremberg trials; but among the felons judged, Eichmann was conspicuous by his absence. The killer vanished. His own family—his wife and other relatives—skillfully disseminated the news that he was dead. However, neither the Israel government nor especially several dedicated Israeli citizens believed that. The search for the destroyer lasted for fifteen years until, finally, he was discovered in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where the monster led a placid and comfortable life with his wife and three sons. He is now in Israel awaiting trial.

His flight, concealment, and escapades when he was at large are a tribute to the resourcefulness of the murderer. He was, no doubt, frequently helped by fellow-killers, the Nazi underground, in his efforts to escape capture. He was a forester, a watchman, a laundryman, a grocery owner, a machinist—all these he became in order to earn a livelihood. It was seven years before he joined his family in Argentina. His last job before he was caught was that of a foreman in an automobile plant.

The book deserves wide reading. Its findings are carefully documented and authenticated from German and Allied sources. The charge that Adolf Eichmann is the killer of six million Jews is indisputable and authoritative. The bill of particulars will be furnished at the trial. His punishment, if he is found guilty, is a matter of conjecture. What will be meted out—death even—is no longer the expected outcome of his appearance in the court. Its importance, I believe, lies in the recitation of the horrors for which he is responsible and the attitude of the world contemporaneous with the performance of his beastly acts. There should emerge also, perhaps, the callousness and indifference of the German people as a whole to the fate of the martyrs. It is astonishing and significant that nowhere in the *Minister of Death* is there any indication of the attitude of the German people toward the terrible excesses of the Nazi. It is as if among the seventy million people who constitute that nation there were only soldiers and obedient, brutal slaves of the hideous Hitler regime.

The authors have done a great public service in publishing this book. Historically

correct, racily written, it is an important document revealing man's inhumanity to man.

BENJAMIN WEINTROUB

*Anatomy of Faith*, by Milton Steinberg. Edited, with an Introduction, by Arthur A. Cohen. Harcourt, Brace and Company. 304 pp. \$4.75.

This book of theological essays is a sharp reminder of the great loss suffered by the Jewish people when Milton Steinberg died, at the age of 47, ten years ago. Throughout the pages of this volume, one sees a man with a brilliant grasp of theological issues and the ability to sift and present them with penetrating simplicity. Most important, however, is what the essays tell us about the author. Each essay—indeed, each page—portrays a man of great compassion and warmth, with constructive sympathy for human ills and the depth of doubt.

Rabbi Steinberg is introduced by the editor in a well-written, but not unobjective, description of his spiritual travels. The book contains seven essays and lectures which deal with the major problems of faith in general and the currents of contemporary theology in particular. The essays disclose not only the results of Rabbi Steinberg's mature reflection, but some of the developments in his thinking—particularly his changing appreciation of the reality and extent of evil and sin.

Rabbi Steinberg may have used some of the language of religious existentialism, but reason played an extremely important, although not exclusive, role in his religious outlook. He believed that religious faith is a rational interpretation of the universe. In fact, he insists that God is the "only tenable explanation for the universe." Nevertheless, he held that "even for incorrigible non-mystics, mystical evidences should carry some weight—about that which one would allow to some stubborn, widely diffused, and self-consistent rumor."

Steinberg rejects completely the anti-rationalism of Kierkegaard and others, holding it to be rooted in the necessity to explain Christian doctrines which Judaism has never accepted. In his later essays, he came also to reject the God concept which is expounded



by Mordecai Kaplan—the concept that God is “the Power that makes for Salvation.” Steinberg asserts the importance of knowing whether God is a being in Himself, and he thus rejects Kaplan’s religious pragmatism as a sole criterion of truth. He feels that there is a need, when the rational process has gone as far as it can, for “that leap of faith into the heart of things which no man can avoid.”

In two concluding essays, the breadth of Rabbi Steinberg’s scholarship and grasp of the contemporary theological world is more than impressive. He traces the trends and discussions about God, reason, sin, man and society, history, and the role of man in effecting his own salvation. In each case, the various views are set forth with great care and clarity. Throughout, one senses a man who is convinced of the correctness of the Jewish tradition which constantly drew him closer to its inspired sources.

The editor is undoubtedly correct when he states, in the preface to one essay, that Steinberg’s “passion and the concern to communicate exceeded his submission to the demands of argument.” The lay reader will see this as a virtue, for Steinberg succeeded in speaking to the hearts and minds of sensitive people who grope in the tensions of faith.

PAUL H. VISHNY

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*The Arabs in Israel*, by Walter Schwarz.  
London: Faber. 172 pp. 21 s.

Ben-Gurion spelled out the goal for Israel in the following words: “The Messianic vision that has lighted up our path for thousands of years . . . has imposed on us the duty of becoming a model people and building a model state.” This lofty ideal sets a good criterion against which to gauge the performance of Israel.

Mr. Schwarz simply asks whether Israel’s dealing with the 220,000 Arabs—one-tenth of her population—sets a desirable precedent for countries that have minority problems. Judged by Israel’s high moral standards, Mr. Schwarz’ answer is a slightly qualified “no.”

Let us start with the favorable qualifications. The Arab minority is materially relatively well off. The Israelis are proud of the

way in which the Arabs have contributed to and benefited from the planned and expanding welfare state. The Arabs have duly elected representatives in the Knesset, the Israeli Parliament; the able among their children have an excellent education waiting for them.

The positive achievements are somehow entirely over-shadowed by the negatives: military government in Arab parts of the country, curfew, and other limitations on freedom. The Israeli Arabs are admittedly a security problem; they have little sense of loyalty to their new fellow citizens. In a country that is in a continuous danger of strangulation by the Arab bloc, security has priority over practically any other consideration. This, in a way, provides the rationale for keeping Arabs in a second-class citizenship position—just a notch below the majority of Oriental Jews of Israel. The difference here is that for the latter, the status is strictly temporary, while for the Arabs, it threatens to be somewhat more permanent.

The Israelis are not doing enough to change the course of these developments. The Arabs obviously have many specific grievances: displaced villagers have received inadequate compensation for the confiscated land; to add insult to injury they have to watch new Kibbutzim prosper on the land that was theirs. Furthermore, Israelis know little about the problems of their Arab fellow citizens, and care less. To be ignored is alone a cause for grievance. This is a pity because Israel is the only place where a great number of Arabs and Jews can meet in peace. One somehow wishes that a part of the Israeli zeal for hobby-archaeology could be channeled into hobby-anthropology focused on their Arab fellow citizens. After all, the relatively well off Israeli Arabs might be persuaded to serve as a catalyst for triggering social progress in the Middle East.

Mr. Schwarz has produced an exceedingly well written and well balanced book. He will be denounced by “patriotic” Israelis as well as Arabs. For those interested in both sides of the coin, this essay provides the necessary grains of salt by which to season the official propaganda pouring out of Cairo and Jerusalem.

FRANK MEISSNER

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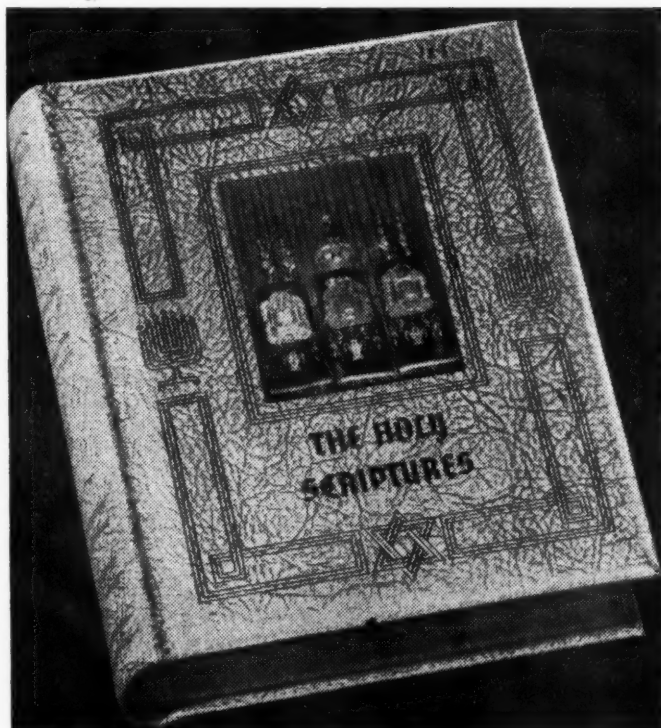
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*The Italics Are Mine*, by Leo A. Lerner. Open Court Publishing Co. 245 pp. \$5.00.

Leo Lerner, the author of *The Italics Are Mine*, publishes his "First Column" twice a week in his twenty community newspapers in and around Chicago. The "First Column" is a very special Chicago institution, at least to the Northside of the town. It does not have to be required reading in any sense of dictation from outside one's self, for the very good reason that everyone feels compelled to read what Lerner has to say, even if he reads nothing else in the paper.

It has long been a scandal and a wonder that Lerner's columns have not been nationally syndicated, because they are by no means local or limited. They have the warm, fresh, pristine flush of the prairies in the heartland of America. To read them is to know what the generous-souled liberal people of a great nation are welcoming or deploring or simply cogitating about.

But even the best newspaper columns become stale or threadbare all too soon. Walter Lippmann, for example, may read like a statesman-seer and, indeed, he is that when read at the top of the morning, but it may be something else again six months later when one attempts to reread what one cheered earlier. Three times, Leo Lerner has subjected his columns to the tough test of preservation under the hard covers of books, and three times he has succeeded. But the real test of this third attempt will come next year, or the year after, when the reader will browse through the volume as some national crisis reminds him of Lerner and he will seek to clarify his own thinking by vicarious conversation with a congenial private guide and public conscience.

The little essays in this volume are from the years 1957 to 1960, the years when the Eisenhower image continued to be less radiant; when the buildup of Nixon seemed to have all of the spontaneity of a fixed race; when the Soviet Union began to loom larger in an overwrought world. Payola was the word that captured the national mood of cynicism. This was not a time for greatness, as Adlai Stevenson discovered rather painfully. Leo Lerner suffered with Adlai and all those who were eager to make America the land of emotionally rich people and realizable dreams. This is his public diary of

what was happening all around him and his highly personal response to these things.

To a highly sensitive soul like Leo Lerner, nothing happens to the outside and distant world: everything happens to our nation and to him. He cannot be cool, indifferent or neutral. He has the gift for translating dull or unassimilated facts into vibrant and meaningful truths. He gives universality and humanity to what is often bare-boned and mechanical. His ample body quivers with rage, rolls with laughter, bends and rocks with approval and disapproval. He is a mirror and sounding board for everything; not a perfect mirror, because he would then be less a personality; not a perfect sounding board either, because he makes noises of his own that are often delightful to hear.

In *The Italics Are Mine*, as in his life, he beats a retreat, now and then, from "the contagion of the world's slow stain." He and those he loves roar through the roads of Illinois and Wisconsin and go to the Kettle Moraine Farm at Hartford, Wisconsin. There, he walks, jovially, through the woods and observes the little life around him, and all is well once more. The artificial insemination of a heifer looms up as more important than the continuous destruction of values in the big city and in the world at large.

ELMER GERTZ

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*Felix Frankfurter Reminisces*. Recorded in Talks with Dr. Harlan B. Philips. Reynal. 310 pp. \$5.00.

Some six years ago Justice Felix Frankfurter agreed to talk into a tape-recording machine relating the significant events and experiences of his life. These tapes are being kept by Columbia University's Oral History Research Department for the future use of scholars and historians. Having excellent recall and the gift of pure and polished speech, Justice Frankfurter provided a record of such frank and fascinating reminiscence that the material begged for publication in book form.

The volume is in truth an important and exciting work. It provides us at first hand with an informal autobiography of a man who is unquestionably one of our most bril-

liant and influential contemporaries. We learn about his meteoric rise from a poor immigrant boy, who at the age of twelve knew not a word of English, to his eminent position on the faculty of the Harvard Law School; from his beginnings as a neophyte law clerk to his leading place on the United States Supreme Court. His intellectual astuteness and energetic drive broke through the barriers of race, religion, and social snobbery and won him the admiration and friendship of the outstanding men of his time.

Of special interest is his own evaluation of his earlier notoriety as a radical. He argues persuasively that in truth he was never more than a lawyer of acute perceptions who had the courage to present the unpalatable facts as he found them. Thus his reports on the Bisbee deportations and on the Tom Mooney case, his investigation of labor strikes during World War I—all of which he made at the request of the government—his criticism of the Palmer raids in 1920, and finally his active defense of Sacco and Vanzetti were in each instance a factual protest against a miscarriage of justice. These protests, however, appeared during periods of mass hysteria. They aroused the ire of men of entrenched wealth and position who preferred not to know the unpalatable truth. In self-defense they took full advantage of the fears and alarms aroused by a world war and the Russian Revolution to make liberalism appear suspect. Because Frankfurter was immigrant Jew and an outspoken intellectual, they smeared him as a radical and trouble-maker. As he himself points out, however, his "doings . . . were quite inoffensive; indeed, I was certainly in my naive way just doing a lawyer's job." Viewed in this light and taking into account time's erosion of one's humane impulses, there is little discrepancy between the youthful "radical" investigator and the conservatively legalistic Justice of recent years.

Frankfurter's comments on men and events are both forthright and illuminating. Although the book ends with his appointment to the Supreme Court in 1939, he had been for twenty-five years very close, as observer and participant, to the center of national and world affairs. On the whole he is outspokenly critical of Presidents Taft,

T. Roosevelt, Wilson, and Hoover. Of Wilson he said, "He was dogmatic, intolerant; fundamentally didn't like his kind. He believed in democracy in the abstract, but didn't care for people. And he'd cut off their heads with equanimity." The harshness of this judgment is characteristic of his general frankness; and a man like the elder Henry Morgenthau is castigated as a bore, a fool, and an egomaniac. On the other hand, he gives high praise to his mentor Henry L. Stimson, to F. D. Roosevelt, Harold Laski, Justices Holmes and Brandeis, and many others.

Justice Frankfurter has little to say of himself as a Jew. He states that he came of a religious home, and had observed the Orthodox ritual as a boy, but had early become an unbeliever and now likes to be thought of as a "reverent agnostic." His close friendship with Brandeis had placed him in the thick of the Zionist movement more than forty years ago and he took an active part in the rivalry for control between Brandeis and Weitzmann.

When President Roosevelt told Frankfurter in January, 1939 that he had decided to nominate him as a Justice of the Supreme Court, he at once accepted. On reflection he wondered what he would have done "had the world remained at peace as it was before Hitler changed its face for a time." His considered conclusion was that his quick acceptance was motivated by what it would mean to the Jewish people. He states, "What spoke through me, I'm confident, was that in the context of world affairs in 1939, with all the brutal, barbaric behavior of Germany and generally the infection that was caused thereby elsewhere in the spread of anti-Semitism, and not least in this country, for the President of the United States to appoint a Jew to the Supreme Court had such significance for me as to make it impossible to have said 'no.'"

For all the unavoidable verbosity and anecdotal of a "talked" book, and despite the egotism spread large over its pages, *Felix Frankfurter Reminisces* presents a personality that scintillates with intellectual perspicacity and the wisdom of the sage.

CHARLES A. MADISON



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*The Passionate Sightseer*, by Bernard Berenson. Simon and Schuster and Harry N. Abrams. 200 pp. Ill. \$7.95.

In all his autobiographical writings the late Bernard Berenson lamented the fact that he had been sadly misunderstood and even maligned. "I soon discovered," he wrote in *Sketch for a Self-Portrait*, "that I ranked with fortune-tellers, chiromancists, astrologers. . . ." Some of this anguish has also crept into the present selection from the diaries the scholar kept on his travels through Italy, Sicily, and to Libya between 1947 and 1956—that is to say, from his eighty-second to his ninety-first year. After re-visiting the noblest churches of Rome, and expressing his excitement about them, he heaves a sigh of self-pity: "How pious I have been and yet, if I am known at all, it is as a destructive, heartless critic!"

Few who read the monumental *Italian Painters of the Renaissance* can have failed, though, to observe that in Berenson erudition is nearly always intimately mingled with emotion. Yet if further proof be needed,

*The Passionate Sightseer* would provide it. Piety in the face of great works of art and architecture is transmitted even by the least of the entries. The Berenson whom laymen remember mostly as the astute adviser to Boston's Mrs. Gardner and to the international dealer Duveen was a poet at heart, susceptible as a very old man to being overwhelmed by sights that merely tickle the average tourist's eye. The old gentleman is convincing when he writes that paintings by Botticelli, seen again in a collection in Rome, penetrated him "to the depth of the soul." In 1954 he confesses: "I feel as if it had taken me all these years, from 1888 until now, to learn to appreciate Venice fully." In an era which considers it unmanly to betray outer signs of emotion, or even to be moved at all, the aged scholar is remarkable for having been deeply responsive, at the banks of the Busento River, in Southern Italy, to literary and historical associations: "I was stirred almost to tears as I recalled Platen's exquisitely evocative verses about the burial of Alaric in the bottom of that stream."

Occasionally, the art historian and connoisseur gains the upper hand over the excitable pleasure-seeker, and we may then get a brief essay instead of the mere expression of delight—for instance, a one-thousand-word entry on St. Mark's in Venice, or an equally long piece on fourth century mosaics recently excavated at Casale in Sicily.

On the whole, however, he is the professor emeritus, finding ecstasy and nothing but ecstasy in the sight of nearly every work of art. But while he praises certain objects for being "really life-enhancing in an almost physiological way" (*italics mine*), the Jewish reformer, the Boston Puritan comes to the surface when, amidst the splendor of Ravenna, he recalls art's major function "to humanize us, to give us command of our passions, to feel for others."

To feel for others! Perhaps he was not, after all, the egomaniac he was reputed to be. He did look at people with sympathy, at plain, untutored people, such as the agricultural laborers in Southern Italy ("at home in Neolithic conditions inconceivable to those who consider American comforts indispensable, but enjoying nevertheless life, real living, more, perhaps far more, than we do"). Nor was he an over-educated prig. A landscape would automatically evoke in him associations with paintings (a professional disease endemic to the art world), yet in his old age Berenson was also able to be just an eye, to enjoy a sight without conjuring up a master of the past. Thus, he writes after viewing Mount Etna:

Its color was silver and mauve over a gentle glow from within. A diadem of snow and below a necklace of cloud. The height of the mountain reduced by its soft long slopes. The sea a mirror reflecting and at the same time intensifying the colors of the sky, and the sky itself blushing, flushing with the sunlight coming from below and making itself felt, although not yet visible to the eye.

But it would be wrong to assume that Berenson expressed himself solely as an appreciator, an halcyonic lover wherever he went. He could become very angry, especially on the theme "Then and Now"; he was indignant about the inroads modern building developments had made: "The Pyramid of Cestius looks like an ancient dame in a brothel," he remarks, referring to the spread of the suburbs into rural areas. Or he notes in Sicily: "The old quiet Gir-

genti of my first visit in 1888 is now a hustling market town with a crowded piazza and a post-office in the Babylonian style introduced by the Fascist imperial architects." Yet his real venom is reserved for abstract art, entertainers, inept museum directors, bureaucrats, F. L. Wright's design for a house in Venice (it was never built), modern architecture in general, flood-lighting, and, of course, those insensitive tourists who come in large buses and want to see the whole of Sicily in six days. At times he is even slightly dismayed by his own Wanderlust, and wishes he had never undertaken the trips which caused him to see "disfigured by every kind of addition and vulgarity" what in his youth he had found in a pristine state. But he also knows that this very Wanderlust is a vice he cannot give up. At ninety, too frail for longer journeys, he at least descends from his villa in the Tuscan hills to the city of Florence to have a last look at the treasures of the Uffizi and the Pitti.

Two errors in the book cannot go unchallenged. In Rome, seeing again Michelangelo's Moses, Berenson speculates whether the lawgiver might not actually have had "mighty protuberances on his forehead such as gorillas and Neanderthal humans have"—yet the "horns" are clearly due to a mis-translation of the Hebrew word for "light" into Latin! In his perceptive brief preface, Raymond Mortimer mentions a conversation between Berenson and Walter Pater about Botticelli, yet according to biographer Sylvia Sprigge the two men never met.

Not enough praise can be lavished upon the 171 plates (three in color) illustrating towns, buildings, paintings, and sculptures mentioned. Berenson was able to correct the proofs—how much would he, the bibliophile, have loved the finished product, a triumph of book-making!

ALFRED WERNER

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**Meyer Berger's New York**, by Meyer Berger. Random House. 322 pp. \$4.95.

Meyer Berger describes his favorite city as a connoisseur and dwells lovingly on its many fascinating and colorful patterns. His book consists of selections from his column,

"About New York," which appeared in the *New York Times* from April, 1953 until its abrupt termination in February, 1959 when he died "quite without warning." His writings about the city carry on a literary New York tradition that reaches back to the days of Washington Irving. Some of the selections are brief paragraphs providing information about New York that would be hard to come by. Other entries are poignant life stories of no longer remembered men and women who helped make metropolitan history. His research reveals an abiding affection for the metropolis he called home. Inevitably, I believe, some of these vignettes will find their way into standard anthologies.

There is not an unkind remark about man or beast in the entire collection; the only adverse comment concerning any of the numerous characters in the volume is the statement that "Diamond Jim Brady was a stingy tipper"—a quotation from a veteran waiter of one of New York's fabled restaurants.

One would expect to encounter stories of Jewish life and culture, especially of the old East Side where Berger stemmed from. But despite the vast Jewish population of the city and its colorful history, there is, bafflingly, no reference made to any Jewish folklore of New York. Obviously, Berger was concerned with characters of all nationalities and races, however humble, and not with any of the predominant ethnic groups. For some reason, however, he devoted more columns to the Chinese than to any other residents in America's biggest city.

In one of his typical yarns, Berger closes his description of a humble bird fancier as follows: "It is Dickens in a low key in a New York side street." Perhaps his most touching entry is a description of Red Wing, an aged American Indian woman, living out her remaining years in a shabby tenement flat surrounded by relics of her once proud race.

Although writers of local color are often given the faint praise that condemns, Berger's sensitive insight into the lives and history of the big city will help to restore local color writing to its rightful position in American journalism.

JOHN M. WEINER

*A View of The Nation, An Anthology: 1955-1959.* Edited by Henry M. Christman. Grove Press. 269 pp. \$5.00.

In this short anthology of thirty-six articles culled from the hoary annals of *The Nation*, America's oldest weekly journal of opinion, Editor Henry M. Christman, could have justifiably, had he been so inclined, subtitled the collection, "... infinite riches in a little room. . . ." Mr. Christman is not, incidentally, one of the employed editors of the magazine. The selections are his own.

The purpose and policies of *The Nation*, however, are presented in the book via an introduction by the magazine's editor, Carey McWilliams. To prove its venerable age, the magazine's Original Prospectus (July, 1865) was also included. The introduction and Prospectus will be illuminating to the sometime reader of the magazine.

The contributors are all serious writers; the quality of their writing is high; and yet, they are not without humor. Their names are not unfamiliar; most of them have published at least one book, and some more than one. David Cort is represented twice; Fred J. Cook and Gene Gleason teamed to tell about the dirty deal for Deany Nimer on Staten Island.

If the selected articles are representative samplings, the magazine is still, as in the beginning, a forceful journal of provocative criticism that touches on a wide range of American life and letters. In David Cort's devastating essay on what passes as "Sophistication in America," he says, "A fixed attitude exposed to life does not know how to survive." The only fixed attitude in this anthology is the pointing finger, and it jabs sharply into sensitive areas of *The American Way of Life*.

The diverse articles, covering topics from advertising to warlocks, have been separated fairly enough into five sections: "The American Writers," "Popular Culture," "The Range of Social Problems," "War, Peace, and The Military," and "The Economics of Life." For those readers who will dip into the anthology more than once, an index would have been a useful appendage. In "The Ruins of Memory," by Josephine Herbst, the familiar laments about new criticism and decadent southern writers are

stale indeed. A more tolerant perspective of such pieces would have been provided if the editor had included the publication dates of each article.

Each essay is a highly personal statement on a topic of some concern to every American. And as in any subjective approach to a view of the nation, the discrete reader will discover many opinions in conflict with his own.

I enjoyed Kenneth Rexroth's valid exposition of the comic aspects of Henry Miller's work, a side of Miller too often neglected by critics. If the day ever comes when wowers learn to laugh, Miller's best books will be available here at reasonable rates. His *Tropics* books deserve a wider circulation, but few of us can afford the exorbitant under-the-counter prices.

I was irritated by Myron Lieberman's fallacious, one-sided argument favoring UNESCO teaching in the United States and a national system of education. To relinquish even more of its waning authority to the Federal Government has never been a happy solution to any problem confronting any state. But inasmuch as Mr. Lieberman is *The Nation's* educational consultant and is apparently sincere in his proposal, his thesis deserves the courtesy of an objective reading.

I confess that I read George P. Elliott's rambling essay, "The Happiness Rat Race," twice; but if he has a point he never made it clear. A beautiful prose style doesn't make meaningful the lack of organization or purpose in an article. M. L. Rosenthal, in "Salvo for William Carlos Williams," selected four passages at random from *Paterson V*, gave them arbitrary titles, and appended them to his perceptive critical piece. It was not his intention, but these isolated fragments are banal reading when they are presented out of the book's context; Mr. Rosenthal's enthusiastic explanations cannot change their banality.

Richard Elman's futile moanings about his short tour of military training are more articulate than the age-old griping of the average soldier's; and I was rather touched by Harvey Glickman's report on the debilitation of *The American Legion*. I shall never forget that it was thanks largely to the Le-

gion's efforts that we got the G.I. Bill of Rights.

But to realize fully the value of *A View of The Nation*, one should compare the book, perhaps, with a collection of *Best Articles and Stories from The Saturday Evening Post*. As a nation, we are evidently much sicker than we realize.

James A. Joyce once said: "I was fond of pictures, but now the nails on the walls are quite enough." The nails driven into the barren walls in this short anthology do not support the rosy pictures of America we see in *McCall's* and *Life*.

CHARLES WILLEFORD

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*The Breakwater*, by George Mandel. Holt, Rinehart and Winston. 400 pp. \$4.95.

Mr. Mandel is a modern painter as well as a writer of fiction. He is thus inclined to think of people and situations in terms of brilliant lights and shadows, sharp, definite colors, and colors that suggest rather than state openly. His novel, therefore, is in an important respect a painter's novel; and this explains its virtues and defects.

*The Breakwater* is a novel about Coney Island, where an annual summer bacchanalia, properly controlled and circumscribed, of course, takes place. Coney Island represents an American mood, but it also represents something special to New York Jews: it is a place where one can enjoy a weekly yom tov. Further, it is the all-year-round home of many thousands of Jews; and because of their proximity to the beach they hear special echoes. It is these Jews that Mr. Mandel tries to get on paper.

The time is the thirties—the bitter thirties when America was in the depths of economic depression and, for a while, spiritual despair. There are about a score of major and minor characters. There are the three Klugs—Fishie, Molly, and their father. Fishie is a sort of young Jewish Thomas Wolfe; Molly is ever conscious of her female juices and inclined to be democratic with her bodily favors; and the father, says Mr. Mandel, "veiled his greed in reverence." There is also Zale, whose inner tenderness and decency are always coming in conflict with the brutish realities of the outside world. Sura, his mother, is deserted by her



husband and she tries to be "an honest woman," but her femalehood is forever calling her, and she finally submits to the embraces of Daniel, whose head is full of radical ideas. There is Doody, Zale's young brother, to whom the world is about as bewildering as it is to Fishie.

The book is full of lush writing:

Now in September The Island was stripped of bustle and lay like a gray shell still faintly echoing the edges of intricate summer sounds. . . . all day Molly worked at the chenille factory so it could not be daytime garbage that smelled. It was the ocean of her lust gone stale and putrid.

A few such passages add loveliness to a work of fiction, but scores upon scores of them end up by making for a considerable murkiness of perception. The result is that most of the people in the novel seldom get into focus—they begin to breathe and talk like recognizable men and women, but then they slide into long paragraphs of rich prose that does not succeed in defining them. Only Fishie has any real fictional vitality, and he, strangely enough, is dropped on page 18, where we are told he committed suicide. Mr. Mandel seems to have special difficulty with his women characters, especially with Molly and Sura, though, now and then, he almost gets some of Sura's not uncommon combination of honor and lust on paper.

*The Breakwater*, while not entirely satisfying, commands respect. Mr. Mandel is more successful in portraying *The Island* than the people who inhabit it. But he is a writer of serious purpose, with artistic integrity evident on every page. One hopes that in his next book he will more fully realize his potentialities, which appear to be considerable.

CHARLES ANCOFF

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*Anna Teller*, by Jo Sinclair. David McKay Company. 596 pp. \$5.95.

This is a large book in number of pages, in substance, and, with some minor aberrations of a technical nature, exceedingly well done. The central character is a seventy-year-old Hungarian Jewess, Anna Teller. Much of the volume deals with her life in Budapest from which tragedy drove the old woman to the United States—to Detroit. The author presents in flesh and in form an appealing, often stubbornly intractable,

commanding figure—a matriarch of old, of set convictions.

Anna Teller's early background was that of the peasant wife of a non-practicing Jew, a mill owner, who early surrendered the management of the business and the charge of the family to his spouse, a shrewd and successful person. Three sons and a daughter were born to them. Upon the death of her husband, the widow moved to Budapest where she opened a bakery shop. Of the four children, one, a boy, had died at an early age. Two sons grew into adulthood but one of them, Emil, unable to adjust himself to life in Hungary, emigrated to America—to Detroit. Upon Emil's departure, there were left with Anna the second son, Paul, and a daughter, Louise. Paul was later destroyed by the Hungarian Nazis.

Until catastrophe struck Hungary, Anna Teller's life in Budapest was placid and uneventful. She achieved in the immediate circle of her business and social friends a considerable following which stemmed from a character that brooked no trifling with values that she considered uppermost—integrity, honesty, and morality. She learned to dispense wholesome advice and commanded the life of her children. In her environment she earned the nickname of "General." She was liked and respected. She was successful in arranging the marriage of her daughter to an affluent Hungarian Christian. She had doted upon the one remaining son, Paul, for whom, before his death, she was arranging a business career in Budapest.

The children knew that they were Jews because their late father insisted that they attend, even if briefly, an elementary Hebrew school. Otherwise, neither Anna Teller nor her offspring differed much from the other natives among whom they lived. When the then Hungarian rulers finally sided with Hitler, the Tellers, together with their fellow countrymen, bore the privations of war with a stoicism befitting patriots.

Then came in Budapest Jew-baiting. Later, pogroms, and shortly after, transportations to crematoriums. The son, Paul, who left home on a brief errand, never returned. The wealthy non-Jewish husband of her daughter, Louise, renounced his Jewish wife and

children, and they, too, fell into the clutches of the killers.

After the war, Anna, now alone, saw the invasion of Hungary by the Russians and fought in 1956 in the disastrous uprising against the Soviets. She managed to escape to a detention camp in Austria from which, at the urgings of her son, Emil, she came to Detroit.

Anna Teller could not immediately or later adjust herself to the new American environment. Accustomed for more than seventy years to live as the arbiter of the destinies of the people around her, she resented the secondary role allotted to her in her American son's home. She insisted on performing menial labor in that home to earn her keep. She resented America's lukewarmness and indifference toward the plight of her countrymen in Hungary. She was no longer the intimate and master of her American son, a prosperous book-seller, because he professed no sympathy with her views and convictions. Earlier Emil was an aspiring poet. Now he was a middle-class business man. Anna sought to assert her personality and earn a place in the new environment by trying to master the English language, trying to learn from the local and Hungarian press and interpreting to others the state of affairs in her native country. She is, in the telling of the author, consistently understandable, for even in her advanced age she would carry her burdens of earning a livelihood. After a violent quarrel with her son Emil she left for Akron, Ohio, where she obtained a job as a nurse. There she was joined by her grandson, a high school student, who became immensely attached to her. Because of the unsanitary conditions of the tenement dwelling in which the two lived, the boy, upon his return home, succumbed to an attack of typhus fever. Shortly after, he infected his younger brother with the same disease. The two survived but there was leveled a charge against Anna Teller that she was the cause of the near-catastrophe—that her stubbornness and inability to live and adjust herself in the new milieu could have caused their deaths.

The book ends with her son, Emil, about to tell his mother the facts surrounding her grandsons' illnesses and her part in bringing

that about. The old woman who learned to pray throughout the ordeal of the progress of their fight for life in the hospital knew as yet nothing about the history of the beginnings of the disease in the children. The reader is left to his own resources to determine how much, if at all, Anna's mental processes and disapprobation of her environment would be affected by the revelation.

*Anna Teller* is a compelling book, unrivaled, I believe, in contemporary fiction for purposeful, vivid writing. The central character always commands attention. So satisfying is the experience of reading the book through that I readily waive my objections to the author's "flash-back" technique and the presence in the volume of rather uninteresting, secondary characters. *Anna Teller* is a masterful job.

BENJAMIN WEINTROUB

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*New Maps of Hell: A Survey of Science Fiction*, by Kingsley Amis. Harcourt, Brace and Company. 156 pp. \$3.95.

Since they were first charged with a special publicity value in the mid-fifties, the words "anger" and "angry" have been exploited gleefully by every huckster with a song to sell or a movie to plug; and the deluge of limp joke-books, arthritic memoirs, and wheezy fictions—all with the key word emblazoned on their covers in purple caps—continues unabated.

At first, "angry" was a label applied by newspapermen to a handful of English writers whose productions—in tone of voice, pressure of judgment, and flexibility of social sense—were at once recognized as being independent, to a degree, of the representative work of the previous generation, a generation whose leading voices were those of, say, W. H. Auden and Grahame Greene. One difference between the "angries" and their predecessors may be noted in the way each has chosen to utilize the artifacts of mass culture. Technically, Auden's early poems show the influence of the movies in their use of *montage* effects; Grahame Greene writes potboiler fiction and movie scripts of which not the least suspenseful feature is to see how the theological problem with which Greene always interweaves his nar-

ratives will be solved. What with their largely esthetic-religious orientation, writers like Auden and Greene have been attracted particularly to a form concerned with questions of sin and guilt, as the detective story. In contrast, the orientation of younger writers like Kingsley Amis and John Bowen may be defined roughly as esthetic-social, and the form of pop culture for which they have shown a preference is science fiction.

Concerned even more than the Auden generation with the possibilities of effecting a breach in the iron curtain which separates the mass audience from the highbrow, and vice versa, they have sought to find what elements of the mass arts may be salvageable, may serve, that is, to widen the area of humane, non-specialized communication among various social and professional levels. The conception and execution of Kingsley Amis' most recent book are a case in point. As the author of three comic novels (the first of which, *Lucky Jim*, was one of the most original and widely discussed novels of the fifties), two admirable volumes of verse, and numerous critical essays and reviews, Amis was invited to head the 1958-59 session of the Christian Gauss Seminar in Criticism at Princeton University. At the Spring meetings of this august conclave, he lectured on science-fiction—its history and significance! These lectures have now been compiled and published under the intriguing title, *New Maps of Hell*.

The book's first level of appeal will be for the dedicated sci-fi fan eager to match his tastes and knowledge in the field with those of Amis. This reader is not a sci-fi fan and he must avow that he read *New Maps of Hell* not so much for the sake of its subject as for that of its author. On this level too the book is most rewarding. Like Hemingway's study of bull-fighting, *Death in the Afternoon*, or Auden's essay on detective fiction, "The Guilty Vicarage," Amis' examination of a pet subject allows him to develop and codify some of his leading views in a relaxed, informal manner. Here, then, are unfolded those workaday attitudes, ideas, and tensions out of which, in a more intense and strict fashion, an author's art is conceived and shaped.

"Related to, but distinct from, ordinary

literary interest," science fiction's most positive aspect, the author finds, is that it tends to be "a humanizing not a brutalizing force." It is a genre gross enough to allow escapist fare to consort easily with sometimes perceptive perspectives on topics of serious social import; it allows for a playful, yet suggestive, treatment of topics like "female emancipation, education, socialism and Christianity"—all of which represent, the author shrewdly reminds us, "interesting ideas that have never actually been tried out." Since science fiction's main appeal depends on the extent to which it allows "invention and social criticism to meet," Amis prefers it to be relatively free of sensationalistic gimmicks like monsters or sex pathology. These elements abound in science fiction's stepchild, fantasy fiction, and his coolness toward free-for-all fantasy extends all the way from its pulp-fiction level to the novels of Kafka.

Not only does science fiction, at its best, serve as "a means of dramatizing social inquiry, as providing a fictional mode in which cultural tendencies can be isolated and judged," but it also maintains, in its judgments, a strongly rationalistic bias. In welcoming this bias Amis puts his cards—and they are, I think, strong ones—clearly in view:

That insensate denial of rationality which is notoriously to be found in much . . . thriller writing, and even in some contemporary literature of the main stream, is rare in this field. Perhaps there is actually an excessive respect for reason here, but whatever may be said in favor of too little reason as a choice of evils in our private life, in the public domain we ought always to choose too much.

In line with its probing, discursive, rationalistic impulse, science fiction is "more at home with generalities than with particularities." Thus, it depicts "human beings in their relations not with one another but with a thing, a monster, an alien, a plague, or a form of society; and while it is true that a society is a human thing, the aspects of it which engage these writers can validly be treated as impersonal." Interestingly, this description suggests that science fiction contains more of the usual stresses and compulsions of modernist literature than Amis would care to grant. The sense of threat from a vaguely discerned, yet clearly monolithic force is, after all, uniquely an aspect

of the modern "alienated" consciousness—a consciousness which the fantasy fictions of Camus and, of course, Kafka, render with a harrowing lucidity.

The author presents his data with the historical sense and the thoroughness of a good scholar. But more than scholarly detachment is evident in his choice of such phrases as "intolerant conformism," "dime-a-dozen sensitivity," or "a world that is hellish because without conflict." This volume may be considered, finally, as one man's attempt to juggle the imminence of such "hellishness" a bit, to challenge those organized robots of our age who, forgetful of home-grown problems or their own immediate plights, stand grinning at the moon with all the unwarranted cheer of dupes. They remind us of Shakespeare's most famous smiling dupe, Malvolio, of whom one of the characters in *Twelfth Night* says: "He does smile his face into more lines than is [sic] in the new map with the augmentation of the Indies."

THEODORE J. ROSS

*Annotated Alice, with an Introduction and Notes by Martin Gardner. Clarkson N. Potter, Inc. 351 pp. \$10.00.*

It is ninety-eight years since the Reverend Charles Dodgson rowed up the Isis River and told the three beautiful daughters of Dean Liddell of Christ Church, Oxford, the story that grew into *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There*. The waves from that rowboat have spun around the globe many times and in many forms. The words have invaded the dictionary, Parliament, the Congressional Record, scientific, mathematical, and philosophical textbooks, journalism, advertising, and, of course, literature, the drama, the puppet theatre, and the movies.

Most of all they have delighted children for nearly a century. Mr. Dodgson himself used the stories as his passport back to the world of childhood, as calling cards to introduce himself to young ladies under twelve years of age. To extend his audience to the very limit, he even composed a "Nursery Alice" for "Children from Naught to Five." And now comes Martin Gardner, science

writer and creator of mathematical puzzles for the *Scientific American*, with his claim that modern children no longer care for Alice and that the books must move over to the adult portion of the library where, of course, they have long been perching, briefly, between loans.

Further, Mr. Gardner notices that much of the comedy in the "Alice" books depends on obscure references—to other times, other places, including some rather restricted data, to not merely Victorian England, which is familiar enough, but to Dodgson's own college in Oxford and the period of his residence there. For instance, undergraduates at Christ Church maintained that when they ordered two boiled eggs, one would always be bad. This "explains" the Sheep insisting that if Alice orders two eggs she must eat them both.

For here we have the *Annotated Alice*, Martin Gardner's answer to the alleged decline and fall of "Alice" as a children's book. The idea distresses me beyond words. *Alice in Wonderland* (as everybody calls it) was the first book I read. Coming sadly to the end, I was overjoyed to discover another volume on the shelf. I didn't understand all the words, or all the jokes, in 1901, but I read the books at least once a year for forty years; and with some study on the side, I gradually attained a fair understanding of them.

Some people may feel that they cannot wait forty years to undiscover the riddles of Lewis Carroll's universe, and for them this sumptuous book has many advantages. Its beauty of design and typography deserve an award. The Tenniel pictures have been enlarged and set exactly where they illustrate the text. There are no footnotes. A deep margin runs down outside the text, containing explications, illustrations, or just beautiful white space.

Mr. Gardner has been at great pains to investigate and explain practically everything that is in the least obscure, and he carries Lewis Carroll's adumbrations of modern logic and mathematics if not to conclusions, at least further down the road. He has drawn freely on my own *Life of Lewis Carroll*, for which I freely admit gratitude, and also on some of the more recent lives in



which angry young Oxford men have attempted to supersede my book, with what success it is not for me to say. He had access to the Diaries of Lewis Carroll, still unpublished and inaccessible when my book appeared. His ingenuity and wit are in the Carrollian tradition, and he has produced a worthy concordance to a world classic.

Why then did he have to exasperate lovers of "Alice" by discouraging adults from buying copies for children? It would have been more constructive to encourage Macmillan to republish the "Nursery Alice" as a concession to the break-down of civilization. Let this Gradus ad Parnassum be given to children who are learning to read in books with graduated vocabularies. Let them read "Nursery Alice" up to ten, if necessary, instead of five, as in a more literate day. And by all means give the *Annotated Alice* to adults who have lost their bearings in the wood where things have no names. But between Nursery and Annotated there is still a large territory which should be reclaimed for Unadulterated Alice.

FLORENCE BECKER LENNON

*Russian Diary*, by Gaylord Harnwell. University of Pennsylvania Press. 125 pp. \$3.75.

Now that outer space has become dotted with sputniks and luniks, most American readers should welcome this meticulous first-hand report of Russia's current educational facilities, *Russian Diary*, by the distinguished atomic physicist, Dr. Gaylord P. Harnwell, President of the University of Pennsylvania. The detailed, day-by-day account of Dr. Harnwell's trip to Russia in June of 1958, with several other university presidents, has just been published by the University of Pennsylvania Press. The slim, 125-page volume contains a generous sprinkling of photographs of Russia's people and its public buildings. By traveling exclusively by plane, they were able to cover all of Russia's vast territory in a little over two weeks.

According to Dr. Harnwell, the more than two million young Russians who attend Russian universities and science institutes represent the top fifth of those who completed the ten years of preliminary intermediate schools. About one-eighth of Russia's

budget is set aside for education and culture. The government subsidizes eighty-two per cent of its full-time university students. Part-time university students receive no government subsidy, but they are charged no tuition, obtain books free, and receive the usual wages for their employment. The diary offers a good deal of fascinating information about courses of study and the amazing number of study hours expected of Russian students.

How much state control of education exists? Well, the Russian officials admitted to Dr. Harnwell that all their education is centrally planned, even the textbooks, but the faculties are chosen locally. As you might expect in a country which so carefully selects limited numbers of university students and subsidizes them, Russian professors are well trained and well treated. A good portion of them have doctoral degrees, which usually require about fifteen years of advanced study. In return, all faculty members have permanent tenure, carry about the same teaching load as their American counterparts, get especially good housing, and, in addition to their regular salaries, receive extra money for any published work, and are frequently awarded prizes of merit.

Dr. Harnwell's diary includes specific details about the larger Russian universities inspected by him, particularly the University of Moscow, the University of Leningrad, and the Kazakhstan University, and the excellent science schools specializing in such fields as metals and agriculture. The universities and science schools carry on applied research, but the basic theoretical research, according to Dr. Harnwell, is handled separately through an Academy of Sciences, in each of the Soviet republics, which covers every branch of education from philosophy to metallurgy. The Academies have no connection whatsoever with the Communist Party and, generally, enjoy a surprising degree of independence. The Academy members receive almost twice as much a month as ordinary university professors. Each has a country house, the rare-to-Russia luxury of a private automobile, and a chauffeur to boot.

Naturally Dr. Harnwell was particularly interested in Russia's nuclear research facili-

ties, and he carefully describes their efficient set-up, very much like our own. He writes that an official at one physics institute impressed him by informing him casually that he had learned his physics from textbooks written by Dr. Harnwell.

Dr. Harnwell makes note of the special technical courses available to factory workers wishing to obtain better jobs. A visit to an electrical factory revealed a somewhat less efficient operation with fewer safety precautions than its American counterpart.

The author ended his stay in Russia by visiting a highly specialized technical school in Moscow. Twenty per cent of the students were girls. In fact, a far greater percentage of women study science in Russia than in the United States, apparently, as women comprise thirty-six per cent of all of Russia's scientific research workers, seventy per cent of the students at Russia's Tashkent Medical Institute in Central Asia, and thirty-five per cent of all the university faculty members.

Is Russia, as is the United States, anxious about changing its education system in the future? Yes, reminiscent of the complaints of American educators are the remarks made to Dr. Harnwell by the University of Leningrad rector about such things as the stress on classroom accomplishment and the lack of encouragement for independent, individual work; courses being too easy for bright students and too hard for dull ones; and the conflict between the older, conservative professors and their younger, progressive colleagues. Dr. Harnwell also confirms what some of his readers may already have gathered from American newspapers—that the Russian government plans to increase the number of university students who work part time from thirty to fifty per cent, and to require everyone, as is now the case with eighty per cent, to spend two years working full-time at some industrial job between the completion of university courses and their graduate studies. Mathematics and physics students, however, will be exempted, since the Russians feel that these pupils mature early, and would lose too much valuable time if interrupted in their studies.

Dr. Harnwell observes that Leningrad's Hermitage Museum "is quite comparable to

the Louvre in size and in the quality of contents," and that the Museum of Religion and Atheism, established in an old Orthodox church, contains good historical exhibits on many religions, with comparatively little material on atheism. Dr. Harnwell was impressed by the Moscow subway system and struck by the total absence of any advertising, but was rather dumbfounded to note that Moscow has few street signs and no telephone books, so that an unguided visitor "must have a very thin time indeed."

Fortunately for travelers, however, Russia does have good roads, and apparently good airplane service. As Dr. Harnwell proceeded on his tour, he penned descriptions of the large, flat terrain which resembles the American prairies, the snow-capped Caucasus peaks and the vast deserts, the native costumes and the strange musical instruments played in southern and Asiatic Russia, the thoroughly Arabic Russian Samarkand just north of Pakistan, and the Mongolian people in Alma-Ata, just north of China.

Dr. Harnwell goes into considerable detail about the progress which has been made in the hitherto primitive, outlying areas of Russia, describing not only the schools but the local governments, the hospitals, the irrigation projects, etc.

*Russian Diary* is an unbiased account not only of Russia's educational system, but also of one man's personal impressions of Russian life. Indeed, if one has a fault to find with the book, it is that it is cluttered with too many minute details about such things as the author's journey to Russia, each and every meal he ate there, etc. However, the author tells us in his foreword that *Russian Diary* is simply a transcript of the tape recordings he made during his trip, and it is its unplanned, spontaneous recounting of all that he saw and did which gives it such an undeniable air of objective authenticity. Because Dr. Harnwell has set down everything, with little attempt at any evaluation, one feels that here is a man who definitely has no axe to grind, and can give us an intelligent report on how Russia impresses a visitor who makes only a brief tour of a giant country.

MOSHE SPIEGEL

*The Greater Judaism in the Making*, by Mordecai M. Kaplan. Reconstructionist Press. 565 pp. \$7.50.

The appearance of a new work by Mordecai M. Kaplan is to be acclaimed as a major event in the world of Jewish letters. This is the case for two reasons: first, Kaplan, as one of our most creative thinkers, is expected to shed light upon some of our most baffling perplexities; and secondly, the intellectual development of this eminent philosopher is of intrinsic interest. In the light of these expectations, some readers of this volume may be disappointed. Anticipating novelty, they will come upon such familiar Kaplanian notions as the civilizational interpretation of Judaism, a naturalistic God-idea, and the "New Zionism." To the present reviewer, however, this further elucidation and summing up is of immense worth. Here one finds the crystallization of Kaplan's thought, precipitated by the queries of Reconstructionism's admirers and the animadversions of its opponents. Furthermore, the younger generation that has heard of Kaplan but has not read him will find in this volume both a challenging interpretation of Judaism's meaning and a convenient introduction to the writings of a sage.

In *The Greater Judaism in the Making*, Kaplan has deliberately cast his interpretation in historic form. It is his purpose to underscore the evolving character of Judaism as against those who would petrify it at a particular stage. Hence, he can argue, as he does persuasively, that Traditionalism and Orthodoxy are not one and the same, and that the former is essentially continuous identity amidst change. He insists that a literal interpretation of Scripture and a "theurgic" religion positing a Deity who suspends natural law for Israel's sake is the kind of Judaism that alienates the most reflective and sensitive among our people.

Let it not be thought that Kaplan confines his strictures to the Orthodox. Regarding religion as a social institution, fashioned out of the collective experiences of the Jewish people, he accuses Reform of reducing Judaism's multi-dimensional nature to theology. If it be granted that Reform's lofty ethical monotheism merits the highest praise, it does not follow, Kaplan argues, that one

need be Jewish to embrace it. Reform must realize that salvation, as conceived by Judaism, has its locus in the group as well as in the individual. As for Conservatism—and many regard Kaplan as a renegade from this movement—it has correctly stressed the "existential reality of the Jewish people" and provided a "transition from the static to the dynamic conception of Jewish life" but has become muddled theologically and ritualistically. In making a fetish of historicism, Conservatism has obstructed the instituting of rationally justified change. The remaining contemporary Jewish option, secularist Zionism (Kaplan wisely eschews mention of Marxist Yiddishism) mistakenly eliminates the religious component from Jewish civilization, fails to grapple with the spiritual insecurity of world Jewry, and unilaterally writes off the Diaspora. The recent Israeli crisis over the question of "Who is a Jew?" and the Ministry of Education's action to indoctrinate "Jewish consciousness" point up the sterility of this approach.

Kaplan asserts that medieval Jewish theology bequeathed to modern times "the basic assumption that the demands of reason must not be disregarded, and that traditional beliefs and practices have to be interpreted in compliance with those demands." Hence, he finds nothing inconsistent with traditional Judaism in his advocacy of a naturalistic concept of God as the "Power that makes for salvation," his call for the revitalization of Jewish religious practices, and his urging that the dogma of Jewish "chosenness" be abandoned. This is not to be construed as neglect of the basic mitzvot or disregard of the Torah which remains central to Judaism. Neither is his plea for the formation of organic Jewish communities to be construed as a downgrading of the synagogue, but rather the incorporation of the latter within a broader framework. In these and in his other recommendations, we find a man eminently ethical and sane, who regards Judaism as the vehicle of a historic people for expressing ethnically patterned universal values.

Perhaps the weakest element in Reconstructionism remains its theology. Many intelligent readers might question the assumption that religious naturalism is truly representative of twentieth century thought.

How many would be content with the notion of God as a cosmic process "due to the inherent shortcoming or disease of language we tend to personify." If this is the case, then perhaps the term God is simply a conventional "super-addition" to all of the humane ethical impulses abounding in this world (and Kaplan properly rejects the Calvinistic notion of innate human depravity). Would not a cosmopolitan ethical culture be the answer? Even more offensive is Kaplan's treatment of la Durkheim of the "sancta" of peoples as religion in the same sense as Christianity and Judaism. Identifying "the basic elements present in moral responsibility" as that in the human spirit which reveals God would appear to be but a sop thrown to conventional religion. Aside from such fundamental criticisms, some lesser points—such as Kaplan's neglect of the socio-economic character of Labor Zionism and his ignoring of the more recent trends in Reform Judaism—should be mentioned. Nonetheless, *The Greater Judaism in the Making* deserves to become—and no doubt will—a lasting contribution to the basic exposition of modern Judaism.

ELMER N. LEAR

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*The Chinese in the United States of America*, by Rose Hum Lee. Oxford University Press. 465 pp. \$7.25.

Certain minority groups have somehow always been escaping the assimilation forces of our "melting pot." Negroes have not had a chance; for decades they have been watching late-comers pull ahead of them. By and large this has also been the case with the Chinese. Miss Lee tells us why.

Although there are only about 135,000 Chinese in America, they are distinctly divided into two groups. Most of our Chinese fellow-citizens are descendants—physical as well as spiritual—of the "coolies" who were brought to California in the middle of the last century. They were railroad laborers, dishwashers, laundrymen, scavengers, house-boys. Most of them came to make and save some money and then go back to their native villages in China. Perhaps half of them returned, while the rest stayed. They remained "China-oriented" with a curious

hope to go back. This phenomenon is not entirely unlike the Jews' wish for "next year in Jerusalem." The "temporary" status of the American sojourn of these Chinese makes them unwilling and unfit to mix with surrounding America. They therefore tend to concentrate in their own ghettos, known as Chinatowns, the largest of which is in San Francisco.

In the 20th century another Chinese group was added to the coolie descendants." These are the students and scholars—the American educated elite of China which, in 1939, came to represent over half the names appearing in "Who's Who in China."

The "coolie" and "intellectual" fractions of the Chinese minority have never mingled, although—as far as popular attitudes and the United States Immigration Service are concerned—they are all alike. The annual immigration quota is 105, and in terms of the intensity of anti-minority prejudice, the Chinese are almost at the top of a list of 23. There is perhaps another parallel to Jews here. Prejudice towards both minorities partially stems, no doubt, from the obvious desire to preserve individual characteristics. Yet the primary reason is ignorance, which is being perpetuated by lack of contact. Chinatown ghettos are tourist attractions; on the inside virtually untouched by American institutions, they are inevitably stagnating. This is because the intellectual elite has intercourse mostly with the China Lobby, of which William Knowland, former "Senator from California and Formosa," is an outstanding victim. The elite does not supply the much needed leadership to Chinatowns. This situation is deliberately perpetuated by the "big wheels" in the Benevolent Associations, the pseudo-local governments of Chinatowns. Such more or less self-appointed officers of these governing bodies prefer to remain big fish in little ponds. They do not seek minor political patronage rewards within the society at large, but rather insist on "uncontaminated" Chinese values, and enforce sanctions against non-conformists.

Miss Lee's study is a real eye-opener. In a society in which the privilege of being "left alone" is part of the inherent freedom of citizenship, the Chinese certainly have managed to remain almost entirely on the



outside of progress. Yet the Japanese are well on their way towards assimilation. And, of course, Jewish integration has made particularly significant gains since World War II. For all practical purposes, the Jew is today counted with the majority. With everyone's eye on Negro and Puerto Rican problems, the Jew moves rather easily into older suburbs, into managerial positions in Gentile corporations, into Government agencies, into English departments at leading colleges and universities. The Jew is now perfectly at home in American community life, business, politics, research. His aggressiveness and shrewdness, his love of the politics of life—like most other of his stereotype tags—tend currently to be assets that promote acceptance rather than mere tolerance. To have Jewish friends, a Jewish pediatrician or a psychoanalyst and to read *I and Thou*, *Marjorie Morningstar*, or *Exodus* are now all signs of sophistication rather than of oddity. So is a Gentile's ability to season his speech with one or two Yiddish phrases.

It would make for a fascinating study to compare analytically and contrast the path of integration traveled by the different minority groups in this country. Miss Lee's volume would certainly be a major contribution to such a worthwhile study.

FRANK MEISSNER

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*The Magnolia Jungle*, by P. D. East. Simon & Schuster. 243 pp. \$3.95.

P. D. East is the editor of "The Petal Paper," once a normally profitable small newspaper in a southern Mississippi town (Petal, 1950 population 2,148). "The Petal Paper" now is supported not by local circulation and advertising but by a scattered national readership and East's indomitable character.

The *Magnolia Jungle* is an autobiography of a native son who neither conforms to nor physically departs from his deepest south setting. The book develops in detail two periods in East's life—his grim childhood and youth, and his beleaguered editorship of a civilized, rather than a racist or a non-committal, newspaper in Mississippi.

Both these periods in East's life were

spent in "the magnolia jungle," a geographical and sociological part of the United States that has had little authentic documentation outside the census statistics. This is the country of nearly universal grinding poverty, of hardly any contact with the outer world, and of entrenched racial prejudice. For a white boy, P. D. absorbed more than his share of hard knocks. His story out of the silent, lower depths is told with utter candor. It has the wallop and fire of a bolt of lightning, illuminating a strange and terrible country.

After an interval only briefly described in his book, East became the successful editor and publisher of a small town paper. He belonged to a "service club" and was a big man in Petal. "I had two automobiles, a nice white house, a hearty handshake, and a toothy smile for all potential customers." But then East published an editorial opposing an amendment authorizing closing the public schools. He ran a piece saying the paper's policy was to be fair—"dictated by logic, common sense, and conscience." He was headed for trouble.

As he went along, speaking his mind about White Citizens Councils, Senator Eastland, and related subjects, his advertising and local circulation sank towards zero. Because of the individual, ironic style of his editorials (extensively quoted in the book), East has attracted a small but devoted national readership, which has enabled him to keep publishing. The *Magnolia Jungle* should greatly enlarge his audience, as well as deepening and extending insight into a society more alien to the life of most Americans than is that of many foreign countries.

ALFRED C. AMES

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*Space-Age Sunday*, by Riley H. Ward. Macmillan. 160 pp. \$3.95.

The Illinois Supreme Court in 1955 upheld the Evanston Sunday closing ordinance when it was enforced against the sale of automobiles. In 1959 the same court struck down a practically identical Sunday ordinance from South Holland, another Chicago suburb, when the village attempted to enforce it against a motel keeper, the exhibiting of homes for sale, a gasoline service



station, and a restaurant. That the crazy quilt of the Sunday closing-law controversy, which includes both religiously and commercially inspired legislation, has become national in scope is recognized by the United States Supreme Court, which, for the first time during this term, will meet head-on the constitutionality of such closing laws on appeals from decisions in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey.

Of course, the legal controversy over such "blue" laws is merely a surface manifestation of the real issue: why Sunday closing laws, and whether there exists any justification in the actions of Christian churches and action groups in promoting such legislation?

Hiley H. Ward, religious editor for the *Detroit Free Press*, in tackling these underlying issues in "Space-Age Sunday," has produced a major contribution to the Sunday closing-law dialogue. After reviewing the social and economic background of several controversies concerning the Sunday closing law, Ward concludes, "No matter how Sunday laws are regarded, the fact remains, as even the courts insist when recognizing the Sunday laws as part of common law, that they are religious laws."

Ward then proceeds to investigate the theological concept that underlies Sunday as a day of religious rest. First, he dismisses the reliance upon Sunday as a day of rest in our modern age, emphasizing that with modern technology rest means different things to different people. The rise of Sunday as a day of Christian worship is then traced from the days of Jesus Christ, who observed the Jewish Sabbath, through the apostles, who worshipped every day, and the early Christians, who narrowed worship to three chief days—Friday, the day of crucifixion; Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath commemorating the creation and exodus; and Sunday, commemorating the resurrection.

Constantine, the Roman emperor who embraced Christianity, established Sunday as the official holy day in 321 A.D. as part of a political compromise made with the worshippers of Mithras, the then widespread "Sun" religion, in the process of establishing Christianity as the official state religion. However, Ward rejects the concept of Sunday as a secular day of rest merely because it was developed by a Roman em-

peror. To him Constantine was the symbol of a strange triune: Christianity, paganism, and civil authority. The continuation of Sunday laws is merely the progeny of a church-state relationship, one supplying the ideas, the other the authority.

Such church-state laws become embarrassing because of the existence often of religious minorities—most importantly and perennially in the Western Christian world, the Jew. Ward emphasizes that Christianity in the modern age must give greater concern to the role of the Jew in the community. He emphatically states:

Whenever a church seeks to impose on other members of the society the religious content of its faith, no matter how it may clothe that content in terms of desirability, the church has resorted to tyranny and become a slave of pagan forces, religious or secular, that are contrary to the spirit of its Saviour and Redeemer.

Strong language! But if an "American Inquisition" arising from the enforcement of



Yiskor

BENZION DELMAN

Sunday laws is to be avoided, then it is necessary that the churches completely reconsider the role of Sunday and Christian worship.

"Christians do not have to worship on Sunday," says Ward. Rather, centering worship on one day may actually be an obstacle to Christian faith. Ward prefers to bring the Lord's Day into every day of one's life. But if a certain day must be emphasized for worship, theologically speaking he favors emphasizing Friday, the day of the crucifixion, rather than Sunday, the day of the resurrection. Furthermore, considering that most people now have a full two-day weekend, it is suggested that modern Christianity revert to the three-day Sabbath celebrated during pre-Constantine Christianity. This

would not only remove the Sunday law controversy (by not pinpointing one day, such laws would no longer be necessary), but would serve to strengthen Christian activity in the areas of education and evangelism.

This well documented tract must be considered by all who are now concerned with Sunday laws in the United States. It is particularly pertinent for the members of the United States Supreme Court who are now being called upon to decide the place, if any, of such laws within our constitutional framework. The cause of religious understanding as well as religious liberty would be well served if "Space-Age Sunday" were submitted to the Court as a brief "amicus curiae" in behalf of the total community.

JOSEPH MINSKY

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*In the warm sun you turned the pages over:  
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You were not lying thoughtless in the clover;  
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There was the noise of battle, and the conflict  
Of countries, proud, of men who loved them well.  
Three times I called you, while the calm clock ticked.  
You looked at me as one roused from a spell  
And gravely closed the book . . . As one returns  
From some far journey, finds contentment where  
In a familiar place love's candle burns,  
And there is shelter and belief to share,  
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Before me a notary public, in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared BENJAMIN WEINTROUB, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the owner, editor and publisher of THE CHICAGO JEWISH FORUM, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations.

That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor and business manager are: Publisher—Benjamin Weintroub, 179 W. Washington St., Chicago 2, Ill. Editor—Benjamin Weintroub. Managing Editor—none. Business Manager—none.

That the owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given.) Benjamin Weintroub, 179 W Washington St., Chicago 2, Ill.

The average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the 12 months preceding the date shown was: 1158.

There are no bondholders, mortgagees, or other security holders.  
Sworn to and subscribed before me this 11th day of October, 1960.  
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